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ABSTRACT

In commemoration of the juvenile court's centennial, the Justice Policy Institute of the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice and the Children and Family Justice Center of Northwestern University School of Law profiled 25 individuals who were petitioned into juvenile court as serious delinquents when they were young and then turned their lives around and made something of themselves. The book "Second Chances--100 Years of the Children's Court: Giving Kids a Chance to Make a Better Choice" is a result of that work. The narratives featured in the book highlight fundamental principles of the juvenile court that helped these youth prosper in adulthood, including protection from stigmatization, rehabilitation, and individualized attention. All 25 profiles are living testaments to the resiliency of the vision of a group of women whose reform efforts in the 1880s led to the founding of the juvenile court. This bulletin highlights 12 of the book's profiles. The 12 profiles serve to illustrate the major themes of the stories. (SM)

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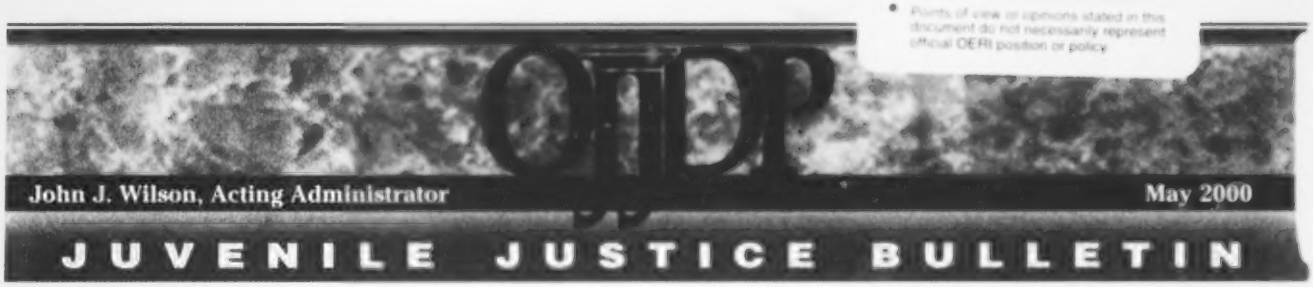

Second Chances: Giving Kids a Chance To Make a Better Choice

In commemoration of the juvenile court's centennial, the Justice Policy Institute of the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice and the Children and Family Justice Center of Northwestern University School of Law profiled 25 individuals who were petitioned into juvenile court as serious delinquents when they were young and then turned their lives around and made something of themselves. The book Second Chances—100 Years of the Children's Court: Giving Kids A Chance To Make A Better Choice *is a result of that work.*

Research shows that the vast majority of males break the law at some point during their youth and that the vast majority stop doing so as they mature (Elliott et al., 1983). Thus, the Second Chances *project staff expected to be able to identify a large number of former delinquents who made good. Even at that, the 25 stories told in* Second Chances *are surprising in their scope—an indication that many young people adjudicated delinquent need not lose hope of living successful lives. The 12 randomly chosen profiles republished in this Bulletin are inspiring examples of individuals whose lives reflect the juvenile court's purpose and achievements.*

Introduction

They are prosecutors, politicians, poets, and probation officers; academics, attorneys, athletes, and authors; students, stockbrokers, and salespeople; football players and firefighters. They have worked at the highest levels of governments, as advisors to Presidents, and in the U.S. Senate. They have prosecuted, defended, and judged their fellow men and women. They have achieved unprecedented feats on the field of athletic competition. They have served their country honorably in the military.

Yet when they were kids, every one of them was in trouble with the law. But for the protections and rehabilitative focus of the juvenile court—a uniquely American invention that was the brainchild of a group of Chicago women activists a century ago—many of them would simply not be where they are today. And most of them would be the first to admit it.

America's juvenile court is celebrating its 100th anniversary. In 1882, John Altgeld, an aspiring Chicago lawyer who would later become Governor of Illinois, toured the House of Corrections in Chicago and discovered that hundreds of children, including children as young as 8 years of age, were jailed alongside adults. Appalled by the tragic circumstances of

From the Administrator

The juvenile justice system is founded on the idea that youth are different from adults. Based on the concept of parens patriae—the State as parent—juvenile courts were established to provide youth a chance to make a better choice than delinquency. More than simply providing another chance, juvenile justice professionals work to enable youth to make the kinds of decisions that will ensure a better future for themselves and their communities.

As in any human endeavor, the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders has its successes and failures. The successes, however, are more frequent than commonly believed and can be remarkable in their scope, as this Bulletin illustrates. Drawing on *Second Chances—100 Years of the Children's Court: Giving Kids a Chance To Make a Better Choice*, the Bulletin profiles successful "graduates" of the juvenile justice system.

The narratives highlight fundamental principles of the juvenile court that helped these youth prosper in adulthood: protection from stigmatization, rehabilitation, and individualized attention. The profiled individuals credit the second chance provided by the juvenile justice system with helping them to turn their lives around. Capitalizing on that opportunity, each, in turn, has helped others through positive contributions to society.

John J. Wilson
Acting Administrator

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these children, Chicago reformers Jane Addams, Lucy Flower, and Julia Lathrop encouraged State lawmakers to create a separate justice system for children. Before women could vote and while segregation was still the law of the land, these efforts led to the creation of the first juvenile court in the world, which opened its doors on July 3, 1899, on Chicago's West Side. The new court was one part of a comprehensive series of century-shaping reforms affecting children, inspired by the work of Jane Addams and her associates at the Hull House social settlement. These reforms included compulsory education laws for children, abolition of child labor, and development of playgrounds and parks as recreational spaces.

The reformers' ideas spread like wildfire, leading to the rapid development of juvenile courts in 46 States and the District of Columbia by 1925. As America pioneered the jurisprudence of a more humane approach to youth crime, many other countries established separate court systems for children.[1] Today, every State has a distinct court or jurisdiction for dependent, neglected, or delinquent children, as do most nations throughout the world.

Addams and the other Chicago reformers helped to redefine "childhood," creating a new vision of a unique, sacred period in human life, a period during which children and adolescents require the nurturance and guidance of responsible adults. No longer were children viewed as "miniadults"; they were instead recognized as people qualitatively and developmentally different from adults. These differences were seen as making children more amenable to intervention and recovery than their elders and at least potentially less culpable for the consequences of their actions.

These reformers believed that, in a civilized society, the State has a moral responsibility to act as a "kind and just parent" to all children in need of protection and sanctioning, and they reinvigorated the concept of parens patriae to govern such cases. In the context of a court system, this meant that children would receive individualized attention under the watchful eyes of trained and sensitive judges and probation officers in a jurisdiction that was premised on rehabilitation rather than merely punishment, minimized future stigma, and separated juveniles from adults in confinement. In the juvenile justice system, court proceedings were informal, nonadversarial, and private; the language of adult criminal court was modified; and a goal was to protect children from long-term damage to their future prospects.

The juvenile court is a far from perfect institution, but its core tenets—protection from stigmatizing consequences, rehabilitation, individualized attention, a second chance for kids, and separation of children from adults in jails and lockups—are as vital now as they have ever been. The themes that recur in the stories of the 25 *Second Chance* profile subjects illustrate the importance of these tenets.

Protection from stigmatization. Fire Captain James N. Short, who once broke his neck in the line of duty, was nearly denied a promotion because of his youthful arrests. District Attorney Terence Hallinan had to appeal to the California Supreme Court before he could be admitted to practice law. Judge Walton, Senator Simpson, Terry Ray, Lawrence Wu, and Brian Silverman are all attorneys who might have been denied admission to the bar had their juvenile offenses carried the same weight as adult convictions. Like these individuals, all those profiled benefited, some profoundly, from protections that allowed youth to put their past behind them and move on.[2] Society, too, has benefited, as these individuals developed into productive citizens instead of adult criminals who would have contributed to public fear and remained a drain on fiscal and human resources.

Rehabilitation. The juvenile justice system still largely promotes the concept that kids should be helped to turn their lives around. Several of the individuals profiled—Kansas City Chiefs' linebacker Derrick Thomas, premed student Jeremy Estrada, former Presidential Honor Guard member Scott Filippi, author Claude Brown, and students Brandon Maxwell and Jason Smith—credit rigorous rehabilitative programs for opening a path toward a better life.

Individualized attention. Perhaps most important, the juvenile justice system is likely to bring troubled youth in contact with individuals who are committed to helping rather than simply punishing. Profile subjects Terry Ray, Carolyn Gibbered, Sally Henderson, and Andre Dawkins all emphasized that people—real people whose names they could recall—were there for them again and again when they needed a helping hand. The attention and expectations of these individuals made all the difference.

Another chance. Finally, several lives recounted in *Second Chances* speak to the importance of simply giving kids repeated chances to turn their lives around and room to grow up, sometimes on their own. Olympic Gold Medallist Bob Beacon, poet Luis Rodriguez, professor and Juvenile Probation Commission President Joe Julian, and Columbia University Law Review editor Lawrence Wu were all gang members who had multiple contacts with law enforcement before they changed direction. For some, their turnabouts came as a result of introspection rather than system-structured rehabilitation. Still, the juvenile court system allowed them numerous opportunities to succeed, without closing doors to potential future accomplishments.

In sum, all 25 profiles are living, breathing testaments to the resiliency of the vision of the women whose reform efforts led to the founding of the juvenile court. They are also a ringing affirmation of the need for a court system premised on the recognition that children are different from adults, a court system that gives young people a chance to make a better choice. The 12 profiles that follow, which are reprinted from *Second Chances*, serve to illustrate the major themes of these stories.

[1] The following countries established separate juvenile court systems during this period: Great Britain and Canada, 1908; Switzerland, 1910; France and Belgium, 1912; Hungary, 1913; Croatia, 1918; Argentina and Austria, 1919; India (Madras), 1920; India (Bengal), Japan, Madagascar, and Netherlands, 1922; Brazil and Germany, 1923; Spain, 1924; and Mexico, 1926.

[2] The persons profiled chose to waive their confidentiality to be included in *Second Chances*.

Bob Beamon

Age: 52

Occupation: Olympic Athlete, set the long-jump record in 1968 with a jump of 29 feet 2 ½ inches. President of Bob Beamon Communications Inc., and Director of Athletic Development at Florida Atlantic University.

Residence: Miami, Florida.

Education: Adelphi University.

Delinquency History: Assaults, truancy, and running away from home. Referred to the juvenile court in New York for getting into a fight in a school. Spent some time in a detention center and sent to the "600 School" in Manhattan, an alternative school for juvenile delinquents.

"I was lucky. My grandmother stepped up for me and said she would take responsibility for me and a compassionate juvenile judge took a chance and gave me one. They were getting ready to send me away to do real time, but they sent me instead to a juvenile alternative day school. And I guess that was the beginning of my turnaround."

What a turnaround it was. Bob Beamon would go from being a gang leader and adjudicated juvenile delinquent to performing what is considered one of the most spectacular athletic achievements ever. In the midst of the wild and politically charged Mexico City Summer Olympics of 1968, he captured the world's attention by shattering the world and Olympic records for the long jump with a leap of 29 feet 2 ½ inches. Perhaps even more importantly, he went on to become a motivational speaker who now tries to move others like himself to get back on the "straight and narrow."

Bob Beamon never knew his biological father or mother. His mother died when he was an infant and his stepfather assumed responsibility for him. His stepfather did little in the way of parenting. He drank a lot; beat his wife, his mother, and Bob; and finally ended up in prison. Little Bob never "had anyone to look up to" and no one to parent him. His grandmother, Bessie, was the one who tried the most. She worked long hours as a domestic worker, kept a roof over his head, and put food on the table. But, there was little supervision and "certainly were no hugs or affection."

His neighborhood in Jamaica, New York, was poor and life there was hard. "For most of my childhood it was just more or less survival," Beamon says. "I grew up by learning and getting hurt at the same time." As a child he experienced and witnessed violence and a lot of what he calls "very serious scenes." As a young boy he once saw a man literally being beaten to death on the street.

By the time he was 9, Beamon was already getting into trouble. He was stealing things, getting into fights, and skipping school. "I was hanging out with thugs and the whole nine yards," Beamon says. The juvenile authorities put him in a counseling program for one year and tried to intervene, but over the next five years he kept getting into trouble, finally "graduating into juvenile court."

At 14, he ran away from home, skipped school, drank, and fought. He couldn't even read. He joined a gang, worked his way up the gang hierarchy and got into lots of fights.

One of those gang fights spilled over into school and into a classroom at Queens P.S. 40. A teacher intervened and was struck. Beamon was expelled from school and charged with assault and battery. The judge looked over his record (dating back four years) and his school reports. Court social workers recommended he be sent to a prison-like facility in upstate New York where, Beamon describes, "juveniles were locked up and locked down for a long time."

Beamon remembers "being real scared and looking down at the ground the whole time the judge was talking." But his grandmother told the judge she would take more responsibility and would take charge of Beamon. The juvenile judge was thoughtful, compassionate and obviously interested in helping kids. He sized up the situation and "must have seen something. He said he was going to take a chance," Beamon says.

Instead of jail, he was sent to an alternative or "600 School" in Manhattan with other juvenile delinquents. It was a hard place where the teachers were tough and the kids were locked up inside during the day. But Beamon learned some things, made some good friends and was given the opportunity to grow. It was a place where he had time to learn that there was more to life than trouble.

By the time he left the 600 School he had a good relationship with the staff and recognized how important that was. He still remembers two teachers, Mr. Rogers and George Goggins, among others, because they showed him that there was a different way to live and behave. There is no doubt in his mind that the 600 School experience was the "key to his turnaround." And his grandmother stayed true to her word and closely supervised him.

By the time he was 9, Beamon was already getting into trouble. "I was hanging out with thugs and the whole 9 yards," he says.

"I got off the corner and into the community center and school," Beamon says. "Going into Manhattan every day from Queens showed me a world that intrigued me."

And while he still got into a little trouble here and there by "dipping and dabbling," he was definitely on a different path—one that would take him up and out of the gang lifestyle.

After setting a Junior Olympics record in the long jump while in Junior High, Beamon was determined to go to Jamaica High School. He learned to "stay away from the old crowd and stay with better

influences." He was helped by Larry Ellis, the school's dean and track coach, who took Beamon under his wing. Ellis recognized Beamon's athletic ability and encouraged him to have dreams and to pursue them. At 16, Beamon started setting city-wide records in track, culminating in a New York State record for the long jump. Now, he had a purpose, an opportunity, encouragement from others and an Olympic dream.

His grandmother stayed true to her words to the judge by staying after Bob. He began to "get off the corner and into the community center and school."

Five years later, in Mexico City, Bob Beamon realized his potential by leaping 29 feet 2 ½ inches, thereby setting new world and Olympic records in the long jump. In a sporting event where records were broken by inches, Beamon jumped nearly two feet longer than anyone else ever had. His world record remained intact for 23 years. Indeed, in modern sports lingo, a record shattering event or feat is now termed "Beamonesque."

Following his Olympic triumph, Beamon went on to graduate from Adelphi University and entered a career in public relations first at a bank, then coaching college track, and later running Parks and Recreation programs in Miami-Dade, Florida. He has lived and worked in Mexico and Spain and has remained active in the Olympic movement. Along with actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, he organized the South Florida Inner-City Games for at-risk kids and is Chairman of the Bob Beamon United Way Golf Classic, which benefits youth-related programs of the United Way. He is a member of the New York Track and Field Hall of Fame, the Olympic Hall of Fame and is in the ESPN's list of the top 100 athletes of the 20th Century.

Beamon's story did not end with his athletic gifts and accomplishments. Indeed, he has gone on to pursue new dreams. He operates his own corporation, Bob Beamon Communications Inc., in Miami, Florida where he now lives with his wife and daughter. He is an exhibited artist, has designed and marketed a successful line of neckties and spends much of his time as an inspirational speaker and corporate spokesman. He has developed his own motivational program, The Champion in You, in which he describes how, "Champions are made by the things you accomplish and by the way you use your abilities in everyday life situations." His autobiography, *The Man Who Could Fly: The Bob Beamon Story*, has just been published. Most recently, Beamon accepted an appointment as the Director of Athletic Development at Florida Atlantic University.

Beamon emphasizes that "we must all do our part to make sure children are a priority in our society." He concentrates on working with troubled kids, "trying to give something back." Acknowledging that, while some kids today are involved in more serious crimes and appear to be less attached to society, he says that "kids are still basically the same; they have the same needs and problems; they are kids; they need our love and attention."

"The backup systems—family, church, neighbors—are simply not there like they used to be. Kids are basically the same—they have the same needs and problems—they are kids."

He notes, however, that kids today are subjected to more violence—be it in the streets, in the classroom, on TV, on the internet or in video games. He is particularly concerned that the inner cities, where many troubled kids live, are even more devastated than when he was a boy. "The backup systems—extended family, church, neighbors—are simply not there like they used to be." Beamon also observes that while today's children are being exposed to more dangers, parents are becoming less watchful over, and less involved with, their own kids. Families are far more fragmented and disconnected.

"They are not sitting around the dinner table, talking and bonding," he says. "They are in their own worlds."

He speaks of the need for those in power to understand the realities of troubled kids—to know their devastated worlds and lives—and then to begin to make those kids' lives better. "We need to get out of denial and reach out to these kids. They need to understand what can happen to them and what is in store for them in the penal system. We must teach them that there is a better, more interesting world out there."

Beamon says despite his early troubles, he was given the opportunity to make mistakes and to learn from them. He had a grandmother who cared, a thoughtful juvenile judge, a responsive juvenile system, all of which encouraged him and enabled him to become a better person. There is no question that his early life experiences were not much different than those of many of today's troubled kids. However, he worries that too little attention is being paid to them. Today's society is "clearly less tolerant and more willing to throw away many kids." Beamon believes it is very possible that he would not have been given that same chance today.

The opportunities provided by a competent juvenile justice system gave Beamon time to find himself, to learn to work hard and to achieve his Olympic dreams. And the rest is Beamonesque history. He leapt into the record books and into our hearts in the Mexico City Olympics. And we are still talking about him. ❖

Claude Brown

Age: 62

Occupation: Author, *Manchild in the Promised Land*, a best selling autobiography on his youth in Harlem, New York. Freelance writer, *The New York Times Magazine, Esquire, The Saturday Evening Post* and *Life Magazine*.

Residence: Newark, New Jersey.

Education: Howard University and Rutgers Law School.

Delinquency History: Graduated from youthful fights and shoplifting to drug sales and assault. He served time in a New York juvenile detention center, and two upstate youth training schools, including the Wiltwyck and Warwick schools for boys.

"When the bus was all loaded and ready to take us back to the Youth House, one of the boys in the seat behind me tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Hey, shorty, ain't that your mother standin' on the court stoop? Man, she's cryin.'"

"I said, 'So what?' as if I didn't care. But I cared. I had to care. That was the first time I had seen Mama crying like that. She was just standing there by herself, not moving, not making a sound as if she didn't even know it was cold out there. The sun was shining, but it was cold and there was ice on the ground. The tears just kept rolling down Mama's face as the bus started to pull away from the curb. I had to care. Those tears shining on Mama's face were falling for me. When the bus started down the street, I wanted to run back and say something to Mama. I didn't know what. I thought, maybe I woulda said, "Mama, I didn't mean what I said, 'cause I really do care." No, I wouldn'a say that. I woulda said, "Mama, button up your coat. It's cold out here." Yeah, that's what I forgot to say to Mama."—*Manchild in the Promised Land*, 1965.

Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land*, published in 1965, just as America's involvement in the Vietnam War was escalating, is an autobiography of his youth in Harlem, New York; the story of how he survived "street life." Brown originally thought he might sell 100 copies of the book, but he soon received letters from soldiers overseas that foretold the 4 million copies it would sell, and how important *Manchild* would become.

"I would get letters from brothers who were stationed in Vietnam, who were from places that I didn't think had blacks," Brown says. "They would write things like, 'Hey brother, are you sure your father didn't have a twin, because he sure sounds like mine.' And some would say, 'thanks for writing our story.'"

"I realized after reading some of these letters, this wasn't just my biography. It was the biography of an entire generation of African Americans," he says. "And that is why it sold so many copies, and that's why it was such a significant contribution to American literature at the time."

Sadly, the story of today's African-American boys too often includes a chapter with a mother crying on the court house steps as their children are bussed away. But today, Claude Brown knows they are less likely to end up in the nurturing environment he wrote about in *Manchild*, the Wiltwyck School for Boys in upstate New York (to which he dedicated the book). Instead, they are heading to adult prisons or crumbling juvenile detention centers. The 62-year-old author and intellectual spends plenty of time with young offenders in America's jails, prisons and detention centers, and thinks he knows at least some of the reasons why it's hard for them to climb out of the "street life."

"One of the worst things that happened in my lifetime was the demise of the Wiltwyck school, and so many [other] facilities when they were most needed," he says. "There should have been a hundred more of this type of facility."

He knows, too, that reforming programs for the nation's at-risk youth is more complicated than just building 100 more training schools. While he dedicates his book to Wiltwyck, where he was sent at age 11, Brown kept committing crimes well into his late teens, long after leaving Wiltwyck, and even after several stints in Warwick, a more hardened upstate school for juvenile offenders.

"When *Manchild* first came out, everybody asked, 'How did you do it, what's the formula?'," he says. "There are no formulas for life."

Claude Brown's crime run began at the tender age of 8. His father, a dock worker, would frequently beat him and his siblings when they got into trouble, and his mother struggled with the juvenile court to get him into the best state delinquency programs. But nothing seemed to prevent Brown from breaking the law. In spite of his unstable, alcoholic father, and the poverty of his youth, his siblings all grew up to lead normal lives.

Wiltwyck was the first place Claude Brown met any African-Americans who finished high school, let alone college. He found positive influences in the kinds of adults he met there.

"I was the black sheep of the family," he says. "Also, life on the streets, it was pretty exciting life for an 8-year-old."

He started stealing from cash registers, shoplifting, and playing hooky at age 9. The court made his parents send him to live with grandparents in South Carolina for a year. As soon as he came back, he began running with his old gang again, stealing and fighting. After a series of stints in New York City's juvenile home, Brown was 11 when the court ordered him to Wiltwyck for two-and-a-half years.

While he kept up a reputation as the school's bad boy, he found positive influences in the kinds of adults he met there. Wiltwyck was the first place Brown met

any African-Americans who finished high school, let alone college. He also wrote warmly of dinners he spent at Eleanor Roosevelt's home, who helped found the school (and to whom he also dedicated the book).

But it was his relationship with a white man, with the European executive director of the school, that left the most lasting impression on him. At Wiltwyck, Brown constantly battled with Ernst Papanek for the loyalty of the school's residents. Only after he left did he and Papanek become friends, and did he come to appreciate his help, and the other staff at Wiltwyck. Papanek kept in touch with Brown over the years and encouraged him to go back to school. Even at Warwick, the much tougher training school he later attended, he found positive influences in Mrs. Cohen, who gave Brown books to read, and encouraged him to finish high school and told him he was smart enough to go to college.

"Eventually, it started getting to me," Brown says. But the positive influences in his life were balanced by negative ones, forcing him to choose his future.

"I spent a lot of time in correction facilities with adults and adolescents, and it is one of my deepest convictions that, of the guys I grew up with, most of them didn't have to be there."

After Wiltwyck, he returned to a life of crime, culminating in him getting shot in the abdomen and nearly dying while attempting to steal some bed sheets to finance drug purchases. Despite three more stints at Warwick, Brown continued to graduate to more serious offenses, including selling marijuana, then cocaine. The pieces finally came together in his life when a junkie named "Limpy" stole his drug stash at gunpoint. If Brown was going to stay in the game and maintain his reputation, he would have to shoot Limpy dead. A friend urged Brown to get out.

"I think if anybody on Eighth Avenue ever makes it, I think it could be you," the friend said. As he tells it today, Brown didn't really want to go to school, "but it seemed like the only exit."

Brown told his customers he was out of business, got some odd jobs to pay his way through, moved downtown to Greenwich Village and started evening high school when he was 17. He credits some of his success climbing out of street life to the luck of missing the scourge of heroin in Harlem—something he vividly describes in *Manchild* as having destroyed the next generation of Harlem hoods. Gradually, he parted ways with his gang. As his friends graduated from training school, to prison, he married a woman he met in night school and finally began to learn enough to seek out a college education.

In 1959, Brown entered Howard University in Washington, and on a visit the following year to Harlem, he saw how far he was from street life. He remembers getting off a bus in his old neighborhood, when he heard a familiar voice call his name.

"This guy I had been to Wiltwyck with, and Warwick with, says "man, I just got out of Sing (Sing Sing State Prison). 'Everybody's up there, and we've been looking for you. If you were up there, we'd be running the joint.'"

Brown remembers his friend mentioning that he saved seats for him in all the different juvenile jails and prisons that defined his life. By the time he got to Sing, he decided, Brown wasn't going to show.

"And then he said in an accusatory tone, 'You know what someone said about you. Somebody said, you went to college.' And I said, 'Ah, you know, somebody is always lying about somebody or something.'"

"It was almost as if we had tacitly pledged allegiance to the criminal life," Brown says. "And you sort of felt like a traitor."

As he worked his way through a liberal arts degree at Howard, working part-time as a postal clerk, Brown began writing short stories and articles for non-paying intellectual magazines like *Dissent* (where his work was edited by Norman Mailer) and *Commentary*. At Howard, novelist Toni Morrison was his writing teacher. She frequently read and critiqued his early work. A publisher from MacMillan who had read some of these articles took Brown out for lunch, ("got me drunk," he says) and convinced him to write something about life in Harlem.

At that point, the longest thing Brown ever wrote was a 20-page short story. He had no idea how to write a book. Six months later, long after he spent the publisher's advance, he was nowhere. Then, he picked a copy of Richard Wright's *Eight Men*, a collection of short stories of eight people's lives, and it inspired him enough to write about Harlem through his own life story.

"I didn't know anything other than my own life, so that was what I wrote," he says. "I know people like to idealize things more, like, 'wrote to correct the world,' but that's how it happened."

"One of the worst things that happened in my lifetime was the demise of the Wiltwyck school, and so many [other] facilities when they were most needed. There should have been a hundred more of this type of facility."

Almost 35 years, and 4 million copies later, *Manchild* has become the second best selling book MacMillan ever published (the first was *Gone with the Wind*), and it was published in 14 languages. It launched his career as a writer, giving him a platform to publish in *Esquire*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Life*, *Look* and *The New York Times Magazine*. For a while, he attended law school, but dropped out when his writing and lectures developed into a full career.

Meanwhile, Brown started a family. He has two children by two marriages, and now, a grandson. Though living in Newark, New Jersey, he is still involved in Harlem and helping kids out of the street life. He works to maintain a program that mentors kids from Harlem, and helps them go to college. Brown also supports a Newark-based program that diverts kids caught up in the court system into an intensive eight week residential treatment program that tries to turn young people's lives around.

"All these kids get a copy of *Manchild*, and I come in to talk to them when they come in, and 8 weeks later," Brown says. "You get a lot of interesting turn-around, and positive changes."

While Brown sees more positive changes, and positive influences in community structures than ever before, he argues that at-risk kids have greater needs than ever before. That, and a mix of harder drugs, and change in culture, produced a different kind of childhood criminal than

he and his gang were. In the 1980s and early 90s, Brown spent many of his visits to juvenile detention centers and prisons trying to understand the senseless violence being committed by muggers. Why, he asked, were their victims shot dead, for "chump change"?

"You shoot them if they don't have any money. You shoot them after they give it up. Why?" Brown asked. "And they would tell me things like, 'Well, it's what you do.' And I would say, 'No, I've been there. That's not what you do.'"

Exasperated, Brown finally asked: "Do you mean that [shooting your victims] is like, style, like wearing blue jeans? And they would say, 'yeah, that's it.'"

Brown thinks many of these kids he has visited in detention are victims of a kind of "society endorsed abandonment," and that that is the heart of the juvenile crime problem. "The most common form of child abuse in America, regardless of socioeconomic status, is neglect," Brown says. "The rich abandon their kids to boarding schools, and the poor, to TV. What happens when you abandon a whole generation to TV is you get a lot of kids who think, 'TV's not real, maybe I'm not real, either.' 'Let's go out and shoot somebody.' You want to cut crime, we have to stop abandoning our kids."

Positive Change, Positive Influences. Claude Brown says he believes, instinctively, that most of the kids he ran with, along with most of the kids today can be turned around.

"They were good people," he says of his former street gang. "I spent a lot of time in correctional facilities with adults and adolescents, and it is one of my deepest convictions that, of the guys I grew up with, most of them didn't have to be there. They weren't necessarily bad or evil, they did the natural thing and succumbed to the environment. And every time I walk out of those huge prison gates, I sense, I could have been here." ❖

Jeremy Estrada

Age: 22

Occupation: College student, science and pre-medicine.

Residence: Los Angeles, California.

Education: Senior, Pepperdine University.

Delinquency History: Assault and battery and carrying a concealed weapon, all relating to his time with a gang. Spent time on juvenile probation, juvenile detention, an alternative boys' school, and finally, the Rite of Passage Wilderness Challenge Program in the Nevada desert.

Twelve-year-old Jeremy Estrada felt his heart hardening as he held his best friend in his arms and watched his blood stain the pavement. Six rival gang members had jumped out of a car, stabbed Rudy, and fled. Estrada was left alone to watch the slow death of his only friend.

Life was tough for Estrada, growing up in LA, surrounded by gangs, his family separated since he was ten. His only role model had been Rudy—his neighbor, his big brother, his companion. When Rudy died, Estrada lost interest in school and sports. His only urge was to fight, to unleash his anger and grief. He turned for solace to the gang for which Rudy lost his life.

He was charged with assault and battery, and with no treatment for his anger, Estrada had another assault charge on his record a few weeks later.

After Rudy died, fighting became Estrada's way of life. During one skirmish he sent a boy to the hospital with internal bleeding in the brain. He was charged with assault and battery and given six-months of probation, during which he never saw a probation officer. With no treatment for his anger, Estrada had another assault charge on his record a few weeks later. He was placed on more restrictive probation. The pattern repeated—he was arrested another four times for assault and put on probation each time, but never received any counseling.

At age 13, he assaulted his mother's boyfriend and was placed in juvenile hall for three days. Even with the supervision of a probation officer every month, he acquired two more assault charges, and was sent to juvenile hall on two separate occasions. His assault charges soon escalated to armed robbery and breaking and entering. Finally, he was sent to a group home for a year-and-a-half.

Estrada didn't mind the group home. A lot of friends from his gang were there with him. But it provided no real treatment. When he was released to his mother, the family was homeless. Estrada lived with his father for a while, but continued to be arrested for assault and battery. By this time, juvenile hall was no threat. He liked having hot meals, a bed to sleep in, a daily shower, clean clothes and friends.

A year into the program he met a teacher who took the time to change his life. He taught Estrada how to do fractions, working with him until Estrada learned the skill. From that point on, "something inside of me was sparked."

When he was released from the group home again, he violated his probation by skipping school altogether. He was on the run for weeks, hiding out in friends' houses. When he finally turned himself in, he was sentenced to 6-9 months in a camp where he was taught job skills, but again, received no specific treatment. When this placement expired, he was released to his father.

This time when he returned to the streets his gang was at war. Several of Estrada's friends were killed. "I decided to get revenge," he says. Before he made good on that promise, Estrada's stepmother found his pistol and called the police. He ran from the helicopters and dogs that chased him. Two weeks later he turned himself in and was sent to Rite of Passage, a Wilderness Challenge Program tucked in the Nevada desert, fifteen miles from a paved road. Unlike his previous placements, Rite of Passage offered Estrada positive reinforcement. Although a kid might be

disciplined for bad behavior, at the same time, he would be encouraged and motivated to improve.

Although Estrada began to excel, he continued fighting. A year into the program, he met a teacher who took the time to change his life. He taught Estrada how to do fractions, working with him until Estrada learned the skill. From that point on, "something inside of me was sparked—fractions struck my passion for education," he says.

Estrada soon moved beyond fractions—he learned to write essays, and studied politics and government. Estrada began to channel his anger towards learning and earned his high school diploma. His counselor challenged him to go to college and helped him with the financial paperwork.

With the encouragement of his father and counselors, Estrada opted to get out of the neighborhood and attend Lassen College in northern California. Two days after his release from Rite of Passage, Estrada was a college student. During his first night on campus, however, he began having fears of not succeeding. Once his anxiety would have spilled into violence; now, he took up a different challenge: "I'm going to sit in the front row of every class and study harder than any other student."

Keeping his word, Estrada earned straight A's in his two years at junior college, was student body President of the Hispanic Student Association, and a student ambassador. He met a college scout from Pepperdine who encouraged him to apply for admission.

Estrada is now 22 and preparing to graduate from Pepperdine University and plans to attend graduate school to study neuroscience. Estrada attributes his success to Rite of Passage, positive reinforcement, academics, his parents and, of course, the teacher who opened up the world of knowledge for him.

Estrada believes kids need individualized attention. His biggest gripe with the juvenile justice system is that, even when juveniles are rehabilitated, the system throws them back into the conditions that set them up for failure. A major reason for Estrada's success was his decision not to go back to his neighborhood.

Estrada now works for Rite of Passage during school vacations. He speaks at juvenile justice conferences and was recently keynote speaker at the World Conference on Juvenile Justice. He is happily married to Angelita Estrada, who attends California State University in Los Angeles, and is the proud father of a baby girl, Angelica Nadya Estrada. He'd like to obtain a doctorate degree and continue to give back to disadvantaged youth. ❖

Scott Filippi

Age: 29

Occupation: Sales Director of a Mercedes-Benz Dealership. Former member of the U.S. Army's Presidential Honor Guard, under President George Bush.

Residence: Tarzana, California.

Education: GED.

Delinquency History: Fatally shot a parent who had been abusing him for several years. Detained in juvenile hall, and then referred to the Oakendell residential treatment facility for 21 months.

"I remember a lot of dark rooms...a lot of hitting...and a lot of crying. No lights, just smack! and locked into a dark room."

While this may sound to some like a description of a night in jail, this is Scott Filippi's earliest recollection of his childhood. The physical and psychological torture in Filippi's life, much of it administered at the hands of his mother, built to a crescendo when he was 16 and culminated in him shooting and killing his mother. Filippi then made a remarkable transformation from a profoundly abused child, through the juvenile justice system, emerging as a soldier on the elite Presidential Honor Guard and later becoming a successful businessman.

There is no account of Scott Filippi's childhood—his physical abuse and his psychological torture—that isn't profoundly disturbing. According to court records, Filippi and his sister were abused so badly that his sister lost her hearing and sight. Filippi was sexually abused by a stranger, learned of his sister's sexual abuse at the hands of his stepfather, and walked in on his mother being unfaithful to his stepfather on several occasions. Filippi was beaten with a two-by-four and belts, was punched and kicked and thrown down the stairs and across rooms. This period of abuse spanned from before Filippi entered kindergarten until the time of his arrest.

Filippi was born to Jerilei Rakin (mother) and Lori Filippi (father) in 1970. Jerilei was 16 at the time of Filippi's birth, and Lori was 17. The Filippi household was in chaos right from the start. Filippi's earliest remembrances include his parents screaming at one another and throwing objects around the house. According to school records, unexplained bruises and breaks began appearing on both Filippi and his younger sister Tyanna during this time. His parents' relationship ended in 1973 when Lori was fired from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for being physically abusive to suspects.

As bad as things were when Lori Filippi was in the home, they got much worse after he left. Jerilei refused to let the children have any contact with their father, returning gifts and letters that Lori sent for years after the break up. Worse still, when Filippi was age four, Jerilei married a vicious man, Paul Furta, who constantly bloodied Filippi and Tyanna. Child Protective Services was frequently called to the home. The psychological trauma caused by Furta's physical and sexual abuse of Tyanna was so extensive she experienced temporary sight and hearing loss.

Scott was beaten with a two-by-four and belts, was punched and kicked and thrown down stairs and across rooms. This abuse began before Filippi entered kindergarten and continued until an arrest in his teens put an end to his nightmare.

Tyanna was removed from her mother's home to live with her aunt when Filippi was eight years old. "Then," Filippi reports "he turned his attention to me." Filippi was petrified over the next four to five years. "I spent my whole childhood

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being scared to death of every adult around me."

Filippi relates that he was either completely ignored or abused by his mother and Furta. His mother told Filippi he was "worthless" and "a good-for-nothing" more times than he can remember. And Furta beat him regularly.

"One time when I was in the third grade," Filippi recalls, "my teacher told Paul and my mother that I had skipped school. When we got home, I ran right up into my room, crying all the time, knowing what was coming. Paul just charged up the stairs. I was in the upper bunk of my bed when he started wailing on me with his belt and yelling at me. He hit me over and over and eventually knocked me out of bed. He began kicking me and kept on beating me with the belt. It seemed like it lasted forever. Eventually, he just dropped the belt, and said something sarcastic like it looks like 'it made a good impression,' because of all the bloody welts on me. Then he walked out of the room. I was bloody from my head to my knees. My mother just walked in and said 'you better take a shower and get cleaned up.'"

Juvenile hall court records: "He was in a serious state of shock and for several days was unable to do anything but shake and cry . . . . He is very sad and tearful when questioned about this offense."

"My mother knew what Paul was doing to me and worse, what he was doing to my sister, and she never did anything to protect us," Filippi remembers.

In 1980, Filippi secretly began to contact his father to arrange to move in with him in Colorado. Jerilei had been keeping Filippi and Lori apart since the divorce, and she was enraged that Filippi had contacted him. When Lori came from Colorado to visit Filippi, Jerilei hid him.

Filippi was eventually able to move in with his father for a short time. On the day he left, his mother's last words were "get out of here." She refused to talk with him on the phone or answer his letters. Lori admits he too physically abused Filippi. Lori Filippi punched his son in the stomach until he couldn't breathe, and once threw him down a flight of stairs in a fit of rage. Filippi was returned to his mother who promised to turn over a new leaf.

A year later, Jerilei began dating and then married Bruce Lee. Although Lee was not as abusive as Furta, he occasionally beat Filippi at the request of Jerilei, hitting him with a two-by-four on one occasion. Jerilei and Bruce also provided Filippi and his sister with little in the way of material necessities, with the two teenagers having only three pairs of shirts and pants to their name. In order to be able to afford to buy himself some new clothes, Filippi obtained several different after-school jobs.

Filippi's work and other outside activities immediately became the source of severe strain between his mother and him in the fateful summer of 1986. Filippi got a job on the Santa Cruz boardwalk, where Jerilei would visit and loudly tell other patrons how bad the service (provided by Filippi) was. She periodically demanded that Filippi leave work immediately, eventually resulting in his firing.

Jerilei also cut Filippi off from girlfriends and other activities. She told the first girl Filippi brought home that "you could do a lot better than him." In order for Filippi to join the school band, the principal and the band leader had to come to Filippi's house to implore Jerilei on his behalf. When she came to one of his concerts and ordered Filippi to leave immediately, he was kicked off the band.

Filippi's Uncle JT saw what was happening and tried to get Filippi over to his house periodically for odd jobs, just to give him a break. But in the summer of 1986, Uncle JT had taken ill suddenly and died. At his wit's end, Filippi repeatedly attempted to return to his father. About a month before his mother's death, right after his uncle died, Filippi ran away from home, called his father and said he couldn't stand it at his mother's home any longer. His father wired him a plane ticket and spoke with Jerilei about sending Filippi's clothes with him. Jerilei told her ex-husband that she didn't care if Filippi died. She bagged all of his clothes and threw them in the town dump. In an act of unspeakable vengeance, she even killed Filippi's pet hamster. But when the plane was about to leave, Jerilei apologized and told Filippi that she loved him. Filippi instantly canceled his trip. "When she told me she loved me, that's all I needed to hear," he remembers.

No sooner had Filippi decided to stay than things between his mother and him deteriorated. In the next two weeks, Filippi called his father three times, each time sounding more disillusioned. Finally, on the Saturday before the killing, Filippi implored his father to let him live with him. Lori reprimanded his son and told him to wait until the end of the semester before moving.

"The Army, Juvenile Hall, Oakendell—I think I did well in all of them because they offered me structure without the abuse. The attention to detail the Honor Guard required of me was easy compared to what I had been through at home."

On October 6, 1986, when Filippi was 16, he came home from school and started to wash, wax and vacuum his mother's car. The whole time he was working on her car, she was glaring at him and criticizing him. When he was finished, she swore at him, complaining that he hadn't spent enough time on it, and ordered him to do it again. Filippi still chokes when he talks about what happened next. "All of a sudden, she just started going off on me, telling me she hated me and she didn't love me," Filippi relates. "Just going off. I ran upstairs, I grabbed a 22, one of Bruce's....I just wanted her to listen, just to stop yelling at me and listen." Filippi fired once, killing his mother, and immediately ran out into the yard.

When Lee returned later that day, Filippi wanted to tell him what happened. But as Lee walked up the steps, Filippi grabbed a two-by-four and struck him once on the shoulder. "What did you do that for?" Lee protested. "I killed mom," was Filippi's reply. "And I want you to kill me. I want to die."

Filippi then ran away from his home and flagged down a passing patrol car on a nearby highway. His confession to the police officer resulted in Filippi's first and only arrest.

By the time Filippi arrived at juvenile hall, records recount "he was in a serious state of shock and for several days was unable to do anything but shake and cry and seemed to be unable to even comprehend that anyone was in the room with him or speaking to him....He is very sad and tearful when questioned about this offense. He states that he only wishes he had gone

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to live with his father on the Saturday before the shooting so that it would have never happened."

Throughout Filippi's life, he had tried desperately to please his mother by doing his chores and cleaning his room to perfection so as to avoid abuse. Filippi's perfectionism now began to serve him well. He excelled in the regimen of juvenile hall, despite the trauma he had undergone and the series of pending legal dramas he was facing. The case made headlines in the local papers and the District Attorney quickly decided to ask the court to try Filippi as an adult despite numerous verified accounts of his abuse. Since transfer to adult court in California is done at the discretion of the court, as opposed to the district attorney, as is the case in Florida, Filippi still had a chance of staying in the juvenile system.

Judge William Kelsey, appointed to the Superior Court by Governor Ronald Reagan, heard lengthy testimony about the abuse Filippi had endured and about his potential for rehabilitation. Judge Kelsey not only retained Filippi in the juvenile court but made the unusual move of stopping Filippi's trial in the middle of the proceedings, rendering a verdict of manslaughter, and sentencing Filippi to a long-term, highly structured therapeutic placement.

Filippi thrived in the Oakendell residential treatment facility where he spent the next 21 months undergoing a strict regimen of psychological treatment. Filippi also began to work for the office of the California Human Development Corporation helping low-income people find jobs and making sure that shut-ins continued to have heat and other utilities. With his meticulous attention to detail, Filippi rose quickly to the position of project director.

Filippi remained in the Northern California area after completing the Oakendell program and continued to work with the Human Development Corporation. After he was laid off due to budget cuts, he enrolled in the United States Army. Again, Filippi's perfectionism served him well. Based on his testing scores and his performance in boot camp, Filippi was recruited for a position in the Presidential Honor Guard assigned to guard President George Bush. This is an elite military corps which stresses perfection in dress, comportment and behavior and is both a highly competitive and disciplined unit.

"The Army, Juvenile Hall, Oakendell—I think I did well in all of them because they offered me structure without the abuse," he says. "The attention to detail that the Honor Guard required of me was easy compared to what I had been through at home."

Filippi served honorably in the United States Army. After discharge in 1992, he began working for a Mercedes-Benz Dealership in Southern California. He rose quickly through the ranks there, becoming the finance director in 1995 and the sales director in 1998. Filippi is currently engaged to be married, and plans to write a book about his life experiences. Reflecting on his life and current efforts to automatically try kids like himself in adult criminal court, Filippi thinks that is a bad idea.

"Jailing kids with adults isn't just bad for juveniles, it's bad for society as a whole," he says. "Far from getting the guidance and counseling which enabled me to become a productive citizen, kids in adult jails learn their lessons from violent criminals. I, and others like me, are living proof that prevention and rehabilitation programs are the best tools for deterring crime."

"I know that after reading this, people may view me differently. But when I was 16 and facing a life sentence in adult prison, I swore that if I could help others get the same consideration I had, I would do it. I am grateful for the chance I was given to make a new start, and hope other young offenders get the same chance." ❖

Terence Hallinan

Age: 63

Occupation: District Attorney of San Francisco.

Residence: San Francisco, California.

Education: University of California (Berkeley); Hastings School of Law; London School of Economics.

Delinquency History: Spent time in San Francisco's juvenile hall, and the Marin County jail for fighting and assault. Adult convictions for civil disobedience.

In his three years as District Attorney of San Francisco, Terence Hallinan has used his passion for justice and his personal understanding of juvenile delinquency to hold San Francisco's delinquent youth accountable and make sure they have a chance at rehabilitation. During his tenure as DA, he has diverted more delinquent youth into rigorous counseling and supervision services, and increased the use of early intervention in the belief that it is important to help young people who have gotten into trouble to turn their lives around, like he was able to do.

The results thus far have been impressive. The violent juvenile crime rate in San Francisco dropped by 13% during Hallinan's first year as DA, more than twice the decline in juvenile violence experienced by the rest of the state that year.

Ironically, in 1966, Hallinan was actually refused admission to the California Bar, based at least partially on his youthful misbehavior. At the time, the Bar wrote "this Committee does hereby refuse to certify the applicant to the Supreme Court of California for admission and license to practice law because said applicant does not satisfy the requirement... that he be of good moral character."

Originally, when the Bar Association Sub-Committee reviewed Hallinan's application, it denied him based solely on his arrests for civil disobedience during the civil rights movement. It was only later,

when the full Bar reviewed his application, that they added his juvenile arrests for fighting as a reason to find him "morally unfit." To this day, Hallinan opines that his juvenile charges were added as a smoke screen to mask the Bar's obvious disapproval of his non-violent organizing in support of the civil rights movement. It would take a six-to-one decision of the California Supreme Court to allow Hallinan to practice law and ultimately occupy the office which prosecuted him on several occasions.

"There was a lot of hostility directed towards our family during that period . . . . And we returned it, in kind."

Terence Hallinan was born on December 4, 1936, the second of six sons born to Vincent and Vivian Hallinan. Vincent Hallinan was both loved and loathed in the San Francisco Bay Area as a fighter for progressive causes. His left-leaning tendencies brought him and his family under considerable legal and community pressures.

When Terence Hallinan was in the third grade, his family moved from the more tolerant confines of San Francisco to a more affluent and conservative community in Marin County, California. Terence remembers the constant harassment he and his brothers were subjected to, including being called communists and having a hammer and sickle spray-painted on their home.

"The whole country was moving right at that time, and my father moved left," he recalls.

In its description of Vivian Hallinan's testimony, the California Supreme Court gave a surprisingly poignant recitation of the pressures Hallinan was under during his adolescence: "...[I]t appears to be her feeling that the primary causes of her son's bellicosity lay in certain unique developments during the period of his adolescence. During this period, petitioner's father, a prominent attorney, was becoming an increasingly controversial, if not a notorious figure in the community, as a result of his widely publicized and unorthodox political views (among other things, he ran for President as the candidate of the Independent Progressive Party) and his outspoken defense of various unpopular causes and individuals. Because of the controversy surrounding his father, petitioner experienced 'social ostracism and isolation and unpopularity' while a student in grammar school. Occasionally, he and his brothers were physically abused by older boys because of the political views associated with the Hallinan family. Petitioner testified for example, that one older brother was badly beaten up by three marines "because of our opposition to the Korean War." At this point, petitioner's father gave his sons formal instruction and training in boxing. According to his wife, petitioner's father believed that, "if you are going to hold radical opinions, you have to be able to fight." According to Mrs. Hallinan, petitioner initially resisted the importuning of his father that he learn to fight. Once he reconciled himself to the alleged necessity, however, the training provided by his father converted petitioner into a formidable opponent—as is attested...by the name by which he is regularly known: "Kayo Hallinan."

After Hallinan's older brother, Patrick, was badly beaten up by a group of Marines, Vincent Hallinan built a boxing ring in his basement and got a boxing coach to school his sons. Tony Curro, himself a former welter-weight boxer, did such a good job with the Hallinan boys that the first five of them became boxing champs at U.C. Berkeley.

If his juvenile record had been forwarded to U.C. Berkeley or Hastings when he was applying for admission, Hallinan says, "I guess I'd be a Longshoreman now."

"There was a lot of hostility directed toward our family during that period," Hallinan relates, with the difficulty of that time still obviously fresh in his mind. "And we returned it in kind."

Hallinan grew to adolescence in the late 1940s. As the Cold War heated up, the pressure on his family increased. When Hallinan was 14 years old, Vincent Hallinan was sent to the Federal Prison at McNeil Island for six months for contempt of court arising out of his defense of famed labor leader and founder of the Longshoreman's union—Harry Bridges. During most of Hallinan's adolescence, Vincent and Vivian Hallinan were defending themselves from one or another indictment.

When Hallinan was age 16, his father was again sent to McNeil Island, this time for two years.

"My father never stopped organizing, even in prison," Hallinan laughs. "While he was at McNeil Island, he became the head of the prison grievance committee and got the dining hall desegregated."

The violent juvenile crime rate in San Francisco dropped by 13% during Hallinan's first year as DA, more than twice the decline in juvenile violence experienced by the rest of the state.

But Hallinan gets more serious when he talks about the impact his father's imprisonment had on him during his formative years. "It was hard to grow up with that much pressure and not have your father around to help you through it."

As a result, Hallinan began to fight, like he was taught to do.

As a youth, Terence Hallinan had numerous fighting-related scrapes with the law, and he saw the inside of both Marin County's and San Francisco's juvenile hall on several occasions. Eventually, when he was age 17, one of those fights got him kicked out of Drake High School in San Rafael, and made a ward of the juvenile court. The juvenile court judge ordered young Hallinan removed from Marin County for a period of one year, allowing him to return home from Friday night to Sunday evening to visit his family.

"My father got me a job as a warehouseman in Sacramento, I got my own place, and worked a nine-to-five job," Hallinan remembers. "It was good for me, in a lot of ways. It got me away from the bad chemistry in my home neighborhood, and allowed me to start over and make it on my own."

Hallinan notes with obvious pride that not only was he supporting himself on his wages at this time, but that he quickly saved up enough money to buy his parents the first television set the family had ever owned.

After his "year of exile," Terence Hallinan moved to San Francisco and graduated from Drew High School. He then worked

in Hawaii as a laborer and clerk for the Longshoreman's Union for a year.

Upon his return to California, Hallinan entered the University of California at Berkeley. There, he joined the University's boxing team, coming within two fights of making the 1960 U.S. Olympics team as a middleweight.

After graduating from U.C. Berkeley, Hallinan attended the famed London School of Economics. While in London, he met philosopher Lord Bertrand Russell, then part of the opposition to America's involvement in the Vietnam War. Hallinan attended a peace demonstration in front of the American Embassy, where he experienced his first civil disobedience arrest for "blocking a footpath." He was fined one pound.

Upon Hallinan's return to America and entrance into Hastings School of Law, his interest in the anti-war and civil rights movements grew. He became a member of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and was arrested several times in Mississippi attempting to register African-Americans to vote.

"The police really hated us down there in Mississippi," Hallinan remembered.

"When they got the white kids in jail, they beat us up even worse than they beat up the black kids."

When he returned to San Francisco, Hallinan became a member of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Ad Hoc Committee to End Racial Discrimination, and was one of the founders of San Francisco's W.E.B. DuBois Club. Hallinan was active in organizing sit-ins of numerous San Francisco businesses which, at the time, had no African American employees. These included the Sheraton Palace, Mel's Drive-in, and a Cadillac dealership on San Francisco's "Auto Row."

In total, Terence Hallinan was arrested 19 times during law school for his involvement in peaceful, civil-rights demonstrations. On one occasion, after protesting at the Sheraton Palace, Hallinan was actually jailed at the same time as his mother and older brother, Patrick.

The California Supreme Court's precedent-setting decision allowed Hallinan to serve in the profession he had worked so hard to enter about two years after the rest of his class had begun to practice law. In an almost triumphantly-worded decision, the Court wrote "After reading the entire record, and exercising our independent judgment as to the weight of the evidence, we find that the conclusion of the Committee of Bar Examiners that petitioner does not possess the good moral character required of applicants for admission to the bar is not justified by the record, and to the contrary we find that the record demonstrates that petitioner possesses such character. This being so, being qualified in all respects, petitioner is entitled to be admitted to practice law."

After being admitted to the Bar, Hallinan practiced law as a defense attorney for over 20 years before being elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. He was elected District Attorney of San Francisco in 1995.

Towards the end of the interview in his office adorned with pictures of his civil rights activities, Hallinan discussed recent legislation that would abolish confidentiality protections for juveniles and, in some cases, forward their juvenile arrest records to colleges to which they are applying for admission. When asked what the implications would have been for him if his juvenile record had been forwarded to U.C. Berkeley or Hastings when he was applying for admission, Hallinan replied, "I guess I'd be a Longshoreman now." ❖

Sally Henderson

Age: 23

Occupation: Television broadcasting.

Residence: Bloomington, Illinois.

Education: Parkland Junior College and Illinois State University.

Delinquency History: Aggravated battery. Served six months on juvenile probation.

Walking through her West Side Chicago neighborhood each morning on her way to school, 12-year-old Sally Henderson passed the young men on the corner yelling "rocks and blows."

She crossed through gang-infested streets by herself as she made her way to catch the bus that took her to O.A. Thorpe, the middle school for gifted students she attended on Chicago's North Side. On many winter days, it was dark in the morning when she boarded the bus and by late afternoon when she was dropped off.

After her younger sister was robbed, Henderson and her family decided she needed some protection. First, she carried a rock in a sock in her book bag. Later, however, she felt she needed more to defend herself and she started carrying a "little blade" in her pocket, which she clutched on her way to and from school.

"I never intended to use it," says Henderson, 23, as she reflects back on the incident that would bring her into contact with the juvenile court system and forever change her life.

Sally Henderson was born in Chicago on December 30, 1975. The oldest of three girls, Henderson and her sisters were raised by her mother. Her parents were divorced and her father drifted out of her life and into a lifelong struggle with drugs. Henderson's mother rose early every morning to start her trek from Chicago's West Side to the suburbs where she supported the family by cleaning the homes of white families, supplementing her income with public assistance.

"We struggled to make ends meet but I didn't really understand this until I was older," says Henderson. "We always had food on the table and clothing on our backs, although we depended on food stamps and were often given hand-me-downs from some of the families my mom worked for. My mom didn't let us see that she was struggling. What I remember most was that my mom never complained...she always made out like she was lucky to have her job."

At Duke Ellington Elementary School, Henderson was singled out for her academic potential and in the fifth and sixth grades was placed in a program for gifted students. She won a school-wide essay contest, writing on the topic "What I would do if I was Mayor." Her essay was chosen as the best in the district. She remembers attending Kennedy-King College for the competition and thinking, for the first time, that she wanted to go to college.

After graduating from the sixth grade, Henderson enrolled at O.A. Thorpe, following the lead of most of her classmates in the gifted program. When she got to Thorpe, she felt estranged from the popular clique.

"I was the new girl, I had a shape, and the boys were attracted to me," says Henderson.

A group of girls started harassing her, calling her embarrassing names, and bumping into her when they passed her in the halls. When Henderson's mother complained to the principal, "he just brushed it off," says Henderson, because he said, "girls will be girls."

On one December day, two days before Henderson was to appear in a Christmas play, a group of girls boarded Henderson's school bus and jumped her.

"Before I knew it," says Henderson, "I grabbed my blade and cut one of the girls in the hand."

She felt she needed to defend herself and she started carrying a "little blade" in her pocket. "Before I knew it, I grabbed my blade and cut one of the girls in the hand," Henderson says.

Henderson was arrested, taken to the police station, and charged with aggravated battery. After she was processed by the police, she was released to her mother. She was suspended for two weeks from school and told that she was not welcome back for eighth grade.

"When I returned to school," says Henderson, "I was treated as if I was a criminal...I'll never forget one teacher, who knew I wanted to be in television, told me that I would never be a news reporter now that I had been arrested."

She remembers little of her courtroom experience, though she has bad memories of her public defender.

"He was a big, mean black guy with a nasty attitude, who had read the police reports and thought I was this big criminal," Henderson says. "He wanted me to do time in juvie."

Henderson believes the public defender didn't care to listen to her or explain things to her mother and stepfather who accompanied her to court: "The experience was a nightmare. I remember crying a lot."

"When I returned to school, I was treated as a criminal . . . . I'll never forget one teacher, who knew I wanted to be in television, told me that I would never be a news reporter now that I had been arrested."

Henderson was sentenced to six months of probation for the knifing incident—her first and only offense. Her first probation officer was not much better than her lawyer. He would come by the house, take out a pad and paper, write down a few things, and leave. But Henderson's fortunes took a turn for the better when her case was reassigned to a new probation officer, Karen Jordan.

"Jordan was so different, she would pick me up at home, take me out to eat, to picnics, to meet other kids, or just to talk," says Henderson. Even though she was only Henderson's probation officer officially for six months, Jordan remained her friend and mentor for years. She took Henderson to a career conference where Henderson met Mary Dee, a local television broadcaster, inspiring Henderson to continue her pursuit of a career as a television reporter.

"Jordan came into my home, she got to know me, and she showed me that she genuinely and honestly cared," says Henderson. "She had a special spirit, a gift at being able to relate with young people like me...I can't begin to thank her enough for what she did for me."

What Jordan did not know—because Henderson has only begun talking about it recently—was that Henderson desperately needed someone to work through these tough issues. For the previous 6 years, from the time she was 6 years of age, she had been sexually molested by an older cousin. When she tried to tell her relatives, they didn't believe her, taking the side of her cousin—just as he said they would. Jordan's kindness and attentive ear helped Henderson to work through the pain of the abuse.

Henderson and Jordan continued to keep in touch when she went to Lane Tech, an academic high school with high entrance standards. One day, after she and Jordan had not spoken for several months, Jordan showed up at Lane Tech while Henderson was sitting in study hall and told her about Project Lifeline, a program developed by several probation officers to offer college scholarships to juvenile court wards.

Jordan insisted that Henderson write a letter applying for the scholarship.

"She sat next to me and waited until I finished the letter and then she fine-tuned it and typed it for me," says Henderson. "Before I knew it I was called for an interview and then I received a letter in the mail, telling me I could attend the college of my choice, free of charge, for the next four years."

Project Lifeline was the brainchild of several probation officers at the court, says Steve Eiseman, the probation officer who worked with Henderson after she received the scholarship. One day, some probation officers got together and bemoaned the fact that children who finished high school often didn't have the resources to continue their education. "It was so rare that our kids were graduating from high school that we felt it was tragic not to do everything possible to assist those who wanted to go on and further their education," says Eiseman. Since 1990, Project Lifeline has funded 80 children to go to college and apprenticeship programs. Currently, there are 40 children in the program. In addition to providing financial support for college, the program also provides mentoring, supportive services and social opportunities for the children who receive scholarships.

Henderson used the scholarship to go to Parkland Junior College in Champaign, Illinois and then transferred to Illinois State University ("ISU") in Normal. Henderson went to ISU in part to break off a relationship with a high school boyfriend

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that had soured shortly after she gave birth to their daughter, Jazzlyn, on July 7, 1997. She and "Jazz" moved to ISU to make a clean break.

At ISU, Henderson pursued her dream of becoming a television broadcaster. In her senior year, she hosted "First at Five," a talk show on T.V. 10, ISU's Cable Access Channel. She was a producer, editor, writer, and reporter on the show, which aired once a week for 14 weeks. She also served as a news reporter and news anchor for T.V. 10. She graduated in May 1999 with a degree in communications and now works as an intern at WEEK, the local NBC affiliate in Bloomington, Illinois. This October, Henderson will marry her fiancé, a sociology major at ISU.

Henderson reflects positively on her juvenile court experience. "What started out as a nightmare, turned out to be a blessing....I doubt that I'd be where I am at today if I hadn't been brought to court," says Henderson. "If I could do one thing to improve the system," says Henderson, "it would be to fill it with people like Karen and Steve, people who really care, who take the time to find out what a child is thinking."

"Jordan [her probation officer] came into my home, she got to know me, and she showed me that she genuinely and honestly cared . . . . I can't begin to thank her enough for what she did."

Henderson is disturbed by the trend in society to try kids in adult criminal court. "That's the worst thing you could do to a child," says Henderson, the anger rising in her voice. "Even though children may commit adult crimes, they are still children. What these children need are people who honestly and genuinely care about them."

Henderson cares about them. She wants young girls in the inner city who have shared similar experiences to know that with self-determination, love from others and faith in God, they can overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. She plans on applying her communications skills to become a motivational speaker, using her story to give hope to others. "I feel like I have to do this," says Henderson, "It must be why I went through this." ❖

Ronald C. Laney

Age: 53

Occupation: Director, Child Protection Division, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice; former juvenile probation officer, St. Petersburg, Florida; Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps.

Residence: Dale City, Virginia.

Education: University of South Florida and University of Tampa.

Delinquency History: Adjudicated delinquent for larceny, disorderly conduct (fighting), and drinking as a minor. Served a handful of sentences in juvenile detention, and spent close to a year at a State training school in Marianna, Florida.

The system was ready to write Ronald Laney off. He stood before a judge in criminal court who was ready to throw the book at him because of his delinquent past. Laney had previously been before a juvenile court judge for breaking into cars, stealing liquor from restaurants and picking fights with school kids and sailors. After serving 10 months in a Florida training school for boys, and after numerous stays in the local juvenile detention center, Laney was now facing adult time. At 17 he was old enough to be held in a Florida jail even though the law he was charged with violating, drinking as a minor, was not a serious offense.

"You better get something together," the judge told him. A police officer who had picked Laney up a number of times said, "you need to get out of here, kid, you need to get out and do something." Laney got the message. After the juvenile court judge, his probation officer and local police pleaded his case, the criminal court judge agreed to drop the charges. The juvenile court judge then washed his record clean. That cleared the way for Laney to enlist in the Marines. Within 30 days he was off to Paris Island and, eventually, to Vietnam.

Today, Laney, 53, directs the Child Protection Division for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, a Justice Department program that coordinates research, training and technical assistance and grants to find the thousands of children who are reported missing in America each year. It was a tough journey from jail to earning a top Justice Department post. During the Vietnam War, where Laney served two tours "in country" as a Marine Staff Sergeant, he lost an eye, permanently injured his arm, and spent 14 months rehabilitating in a Naval hospital. But the decorated veteran, who proudly displays the Marine seal on the front of his desk, doesn't regret a moment.

"They don't take bad kids like me anymore," he says, lamenting the loss of the military as an option for delinquent youth. "I met lots of people in the military with similar backgrounds. They also had a choice: the military or jail. We've lost an opportunity to give youth a chance at a different life."

Born to a poor family in Kannapolis, North Carolina, Laney, his mother, and his four siblings were frequently abused by their father—an alcoholic.

"One time, a day after he got his paycheck and was drinking, my dad came home, and tried to kick my cat," Laney reports. "He missed and kicked the wall. Then he got angry and decided he would kick me, because it was my cat. He kicked me like you would kick a football, but that was pretty much routine." One day, when his father was out drinking, he, his mother, and siblings slipped away, fleeing to Jacksonville Beach, Florida.

Even though an older sister already lived there and was somewhat established, the move was traumatic.

"Coming from a very rural community, where religion was a big factor in our lifestyle, I suddenly was an urban kid," he says. "I got introduced to crime real quick." As soon as he arrived, Laney says he started to hang around with "the deviant" crowd. "We kind of rumbled on the beach, like, all the time," he says.

At 15, Laney was first picked up for fighting on the beach, earning him a day in juvenile detention. Next, he and two adults broke into a fancy French restaurant, and stole 28 bottles of liquor. When one of the adults was arrested and confessed to their burglary, the police came by Laney's eighth grade classroom and dragged him out of class. He was put in detention for ten days.

It wasn't long before Laney was on a first name basis with Judge Weinguard, the juvenile court judge, and Officer Starnes. One night, Laney was again arrested for fighting. He thought he was about to be thrown in the back of an empty police car, and taken in for another short stint in juvenile detention. Instead, he discovered that Judge Weinguard and his probation officer were sitting in the back of the police car, waiting to throw the book at him. He spent 30 more days in detention before he was shipped off to the State training school in Marianna, way up on the Florida Panhandle.

Laney was on a first name basis with Judge Weinguard, the juvenile court judge, and Officer Starnes.

It was an old-style reform school, complete with corporal punishment. The compound had a yellow building called "the white house" where beatings were doled out for transgressions. Laney was beaten with a leather barber's strap twice: once for smoking a Winston cigarette, and another time for fighting with another kid on the basketball court. "They were careful to hit you with your Levis on," he says. "It never left a scar." He says the beatings made less of an impression on him during his ten months at Marianna than did his experiences with the toughened kids. "I knew some of them had been in there three times, and were headed to prison. I just decided, this is not for me."

He studied hard, working most of his way towards his high school diploma, spending the rest of the time picking up medical skills as a nursing assistant in the school's clinic. He was planning to pull his life together when he got out, but when he returned to Jacksonville Beach, he quickly fell back in with the same crowd, and was arrested for drinking on the beach. Judge Weinguard and Officer Starnes stepped in, pleading with the criminal court judge to give Laney the option of joining the Marines. "They knew, and I knew, I had to get out of there," he says. They saw something in Laney that was worth saving.

"They [the Marines] don't take bad kids like me anymore. I met a lot of people in the military with similar backgrounds, and we've lost an opportunity to give youth a chance at a different life."

Staff Sergeant Laney had a stellar seven year career in the Marines. He had stints in Hawaii, served as an instructor at Quantico, Virginia, and worked at the Navy/Marine prison in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. During that time, he earned a GED, three presidential unit citations, several personal citations, and a Purple Heart. He served two tours in Vietnam, but was badly injured when during a fire fight, he was hit by a rocket. The explosion took off part of his shoulder and blinded him in the right eye. He spent 14 months in a hospital and was medically discharged from the Marines in October, 1970.

Laney says he was drawn towards criminology when he resumed academic life at a junior college. He was interested in helping kids like himself. While working towards an advanced degree in criminology, he worked part-time as a juvenile probation officer. He says he had a special affinity for the kids he worked with.

"I dealt with hardened delinquents," Laney says. "The social worker would look at a kid I worked with and say: They're easily aggravated and can't put a complete sentence together. And the kids would come to me and say: Could you talk to us in street language and cut the therapy stuff. Without saying anything, they knew I had been there, and they knew I cared. They also knew my military background and not to mess around with me."

"The adult system is a failure at rehabilitation, with high recidivism. Why would we want to put a troubled kid into a system that doesn't give him a chance to succeed? It doesn't make any sense."

Laney joined the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in 1979, quickly working his way up through the ranks by developing juvenile training programs for law enforcement. Once, the Chief of Police came from Jacksonville Beach to attend one of Laney's trainings.

"He remembered me," Laney says with a sly smile. "He said he could not believe it was me."

In 1994, Laney was appointed Director of the Missing and Exploited Children's Program, the Division in OJJDP that coordinates and trains local officials and practitioners on how to deal with child abduction and exploitation.

"When I started working on these issues, they weren't in the paper every day," he says. "Now, people expect, rightly so, that society has an obligation to protect children by responding effectively to missing and exploited children cases."

The office works to quickly get information out on missing children, trains law enforcement on how to coordinate a search for an abducted child, and how to respond to child abuse and exploitation.

"What you see today that you didn't see ten years ago is that law enforcement has a plan," he says. "When children are

reported missing, they know it is important to move quickly to start the search. Law enforcement is also learning the link between child abuse and juvenile violence and the dangers of the Internet."

From the vantage of his busy Justice Department office, Laney wishes he could have saved his mother the grief of watching his slide towards delinquency and thinks parents like his need help. "If I was changing the system, I would add more programs to help people like her." He also thinks that some form of mandatory service, if not an outright military draft, would give kids like him an important option. "What we do now is, stick them in a boot camp and then put them right back into the same environment where they ran into trouble with no support system. What's the sense of that?"

He is particularly concerned with the trend towards passing new laws to blend the criminal and juvenile justice systems. In October 1998, the reauthorization of his program was tied to Senate juvenile justice legislation that would have mandated lowering the age by which kids could be tried, and imprisoned, as adults. Laney shakes his head in disgust.

"First, in criminal court, what you have done is extend the time that they can commit petty acts without sanction, and lock them up as criminals, when they do something serious," he says. "Second, let's face it, the adult system is a failure at rehabilitation, with high recidivism. Why would we want to put a troubled kid into a system that doesn't give him a chance to succeed? It doesn't make any sense." ❖

Luis Rodriguez

Age: 45

Occupation: Poet, Author, and Journalist.

Residence: Chicago, Illinois.

Education: California State University.

Delinquency History: Shoplifting, burglary, robbery and attempted murder in relation to his membership in a gang. Spent time in jail, both as a juvenile, and for a short time as an adult. Arrested for disturbing the peace at an antiwar march.

Sitting in the back of a black bus chained to other young Chicano boys and men, his head still groggy from the blow of a sheriff's billy club, and his eyes still burning from a macing, 16-year-old Luis Rodriguez wondered what was in store for him.

Earlier that day, August 29, 1970, he was one of 30,000 Chicano protesters gathered in East L.A.'s Belvedere Park to oppose the Vietnam War. Still a member of South San Gabriel's Las Lomas gang, Rodriguez was beginning to shed his gang "jacket" as he became swept up in a new kind of youth empowerment brewing in the barrios—community organizing and political protest.

The bus' first stop was at juvenile hall but there was no room so Rodriguez was taken back to L.A. County Jail. Though it was illegal, the police held Rodriguez and the three other teens, including a terrified boy of 13, in the adult facility. They soon moved the four boys into the Hall of Justice jail, known as the Glasshouse, and tossed them into "murderer's row" where the most hardcore criminals awaited trial. In the cell next to the boys was none other than Charles Manson, who soon began ranting and raving racial slurs and urging the few white inmates to kill them all.

But Manson's ravings were only the beginning of Rodriguez's problems. Within minutes after being placed in the cell, one of the murderers pressed a razor against Rodriguez's throat while several others covetously eyed the other boys. For Rodriguez, it was do or die. He knew that if he showed fear, he and the other boys could probably be raped or killed.

Years of La Vida Loca, "The Crazy Life"—gang membership, violence, drugs and watching friends die—had prepared Rodriguez for this moment. He stared down his assailant, signaling that he would not go down without a fight. The older cons backed down and left the other boys alone.

They began shoplifting food, but quickly moved to stealing cars, ripping off homes and sticking up trucks and stores for bigger loot.

Although he survived, Rodriguez calls the time he spent in adult jail "his ten days in hell." Throughout this stay, he kept up his front but feared that at a moment's notice he or one of the other boys would be assaulted. "Placing kids in adult jail cells is a guarantee that you will destroy them," says Rodriguez. Those who are assaulted "can't whine, can't cry, and can't tell nobody" because the abuse will only grow worse. Those, like him, who were not assaulted, are still harmed because they are forced to ally themselves with more criminally sophisticated adults.

Rodriguez's teenage encounter with Charles Manson is just one of many compelling stories recounted in his highly acclaimed memoir, *Always Running: La Vida Loca: Gang Days in L.A.* The book chronicles every step in Rodriguez's evolution from a hardcore gang member to an accomplished poet and author. Rodriguez's life is a testament to the resiliency of children, their capacity for change, and the important role that committed adults must play in helping them gain control of their destinies.

Born in El Paso, Texas in 1954, Rodriguez was the son of a high school principal in a large town on the Mexican side of the border. Shortly after Rodriguez's birth, Rodriguez's father was jailed after a dispute with local politicians. As soon as he was released, the family fled Mexico for the barrios of South Central and East L.A. where they ultimately settled in a neighborhood known as South San Gabriel.

Describing himself as a "shy and broken down" kid, Rodriguez was drawn to the gang life at 11. "We didn't call them gangs," says Rodriguez, "they were clubs or clicas," loose affiliations of neighborhood teens who bonded together for self-protection against other teens and abusive police officers. Shortly after Rodriguez and three friends formed their first club, "The Impersonations," Rodriguez's family moved to a new neighborhood smack in the middle of the territory presided over by the area's two largest gangs—Las Lomas and Sangra.

For a while, Rodriguez and three friends tried to operate outside the confines of the two rival gangs. They began shoplifting food from the local grocery store but quickly moved to stealing cars for a local chop shop operator. They then started ripping off homes and sticking up trucks and stores for bigger loot. But Las Lomas and Sangra began taking over all outside clubs to consolidate their power. Rodriguez and his friends were forced to choose.

Rodriguez chose Las Lomas and was initiated into the gang with a barrage of blows and kicks from steel-tipped boots. Later on the night of his initiation, Rodriguez and the other newcomers were piled into a pickup and driven into rival Sangra territory. The truck pulled up beside a group of teens in a Desoto who were listening to music and drinking beer. Soon, tire irons and two-by fours were raining down on the boys' heads and destroying their car.

From his perch in the pickup, Rodriguez observed the beating but felt almost oblivious to it. He was shaken from his stupor when an older Lomas leader suddenly thrust a rusty screwdriver into his hand and led him to one of the wounded boys. "Do it," directed the leader. Rodriguez followed orders, stabbing the already injured driver in the arm. He was now a full-fledged member of Lomas.

As Rodriguez's criminal activity escalated, so did his drug use. He started using drugs when he was 12, sniffing spray paint, aerosol, gasoline and anything else that would give him a cheap high. After a friend had to use mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to revive him, he stopped sniffing and moved on to reds (downers) and whites (uppers). Heroin soon followed. The drugs numbed his emotions and tended to meliorate Rodriguez's rage rather than fuel it.

By 15, Rodriguez had been expelled from school and thrown out of his house by his mother, who had tired of picking him up from police stations and waiting up nights wondering whether he'd come home alive. He lived on the streets for a while, sleeping on the floors of friends' houses, crashing in fields, in parks, in cars, or wherever he could get some sleep. He felt hopeless and contemplated suicide, even taking a blade to his wrists on one occasion.

The Youth Center director, Chente Ramirez, agreed to mentor Luis on one condition: he had to reenroll in high school.

As the violence between Las Lomas and Sangra gangs escalated and the death toll mounted, the South San Gabriel community rallied to halt the violence and reclaim their youth. Funded by federal anti-poverty money, community centers sprung up throughout East L.A.'s barrios, offering dropout programs, job placements, counseling and recreational and cultural opportunities for young people. Rodriguez hung out with other Lomas members at the John Fabela Youth Center (named after a fallen comrade), where he first met the Youth Center's director, whom he gives the pseudonym Chente Ramirez in his book.

"Youth is youth for a good reason. Youth are very malleable and it is society's obligation to try to change them: I am living proof of the capacity for change."

Ramirez played a pivotal role in changing Rodriguez's world view, channeling his rage into a constructive activism and assisting him to leave the gang. Rodriguez was instantly drawn to Ramirez, a former counselor for the California Youth Authority, an experienced community organizer and a native of East L.A.'s barrios who had come back after college.

Ramirez was drawn to Rodriguez, attracted by his thirst for learning. As a youth, Rodriguez had read all the history books about Mexico he could find in the library. He also read books like Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land* and Alex Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and later Puerto Rican Piri Thomas' *Down These Mean Streets*, autobiographical novels which spoke to and inspired Rodriguez. Ramirez agreed to mentor Rodriguez on one condition: Rodriguez had to reenroll in high school.

Rodriguez agreed to give high school a second chance. He immediately became a leader of the Chicano student club and soon led the charge to break down the barriers between white and Mexican students. He and a female co-leader became the first Mexicans to be the school's mascots "Joe and Josephine Aztec"—dazzling the judges with their well rehearsed authentic folkloric routine in full Aztec costume dress. He also organized a successful walkout for Chicano studies, helped open up the football team to Mexican players and convinced the school to make soccer a school-sponsored sport.

Rodriguez's creative side also blossomed. Inspired by a book of Mexican muralists, Rodriguez led teams of youth gang members throughout the nearby city of Rosemead, painting vivid and colorful murals, doing their best to copy the Mexican masters Rivera, Siquieros, and Orozco. He began writing in earnest, compiling his

thoughts and reflections on gang life in a journal and pounding out a weekly column in the school's newspaper.

But just as Rodriguez's life started to turn around, he was pulled off course by "La Vida Loca." When a friend from Lomas was jumped and called a greaser by a neighborhood club of white bikers, Rodriguez was recruited to participate in the payback. He shot one of the bikers, was arrested as he fled the scene, and was charged with attempted murder.

Ramirez came to the rescue. He helped get Rodriguez out of jail and convinced Rodriguez's parents to take him back in. The bikers refused to identify Rodriguez as the shooter, choosing instead to pin the rap on the boy who had lent Rodriguez the gun and with whom they had a long-running beef. Rodriguez's life was back on course.

When Rodriguez returned to school, he learned that he had won a writing contest, earning him $250, a publishing contract and a plane ride—his first—to Berkeley. Unbeknownst to him, Ms. Baez, a school counselor, had entered Rodriguez's work in a Chicano literary contest. Rodriguez graduated high school and with Ms. Baez's and Ramirez's assistance, he received an Economic Opportunity Program ("EOP") Grant to attend California State University.

Rodriguez began California State in Los Angeles in the fall of 1972, majoring in Broadcast Journalism and Chicano studies. He worked odd-jobs to help pay for college, joined Mexican clubs at school and wrote for a club's newspaper. He also trained and organized youth from neighboring high schools. He met a beautiful girl, Camila Martinez, who would later become his wife. But a chance encounter with the L.A. County Sheriffs again set him back.

At a club one evening outside the barrio, Rodriguez saw several L.A. County Sheriffs assaulting a woman. When he called out for them to leave her alone, they pounced on him, cuffed him, and tossed him into a squad car. He was charged with assaulting a police officer and, for the first time in his life, faced hard prison time as an adult.

On the day of his trial, Rodriguez's Public Defender urged Rodriguez to enter a plea. Rodriguez wanted to tell his side of the story but the PD kept saying the judge would never believe him over the deputies. Ramirez urged Rodriguez to take the deal. Rodriguez swallowed his pride and pled guilty to drunk and disorderly conduct even though he wasn't drunk. He had to spend nearly three months in a jail, but he escaped a longer stint in state prison.

His jail time set him too far back to continue at Cal State. He stayed in the barrio, worked odd jobs and attempted to mediate a truce in the still-brewing gang war between Lomas and Sangra. Viewed as a traitor, Rodriguez became a target of members of his own gang. When several lifelong friends opened fire at him, he was finally ready to leave the gang. Ramirez again came to his rescue, hiding Rodriguez in a San Pedro housing project and helping him find work outside the barrio.

For the next seven years, Rodriguez worked in steel mills, foundries, and construction sites in the industrial corridor that ringed L.A. He continued his community and organizing work and stayed out of the barrio and the gang life. He married Camila and had two children, a daughter, Andrea, and a son, Ramiro.

But something was missing. His new life, consumed with work, left little time for writing. Without an outlet to unleash his pain, he began to drink heavily. His marriage crumbled and Rodriguez soon saw little of his two small children.

This time, writing brought Rodriguez out of his despair. When he was fired from his job in 1979, he moved back to East L.A. and got a job paying $100 a week working for an East L.A. paper. He went back to school, got a certificate in a journalism training program and soon began working regularly as a crime reporter for a San Bernardino daily. Unable to find a newspaper job at a big Los Angeles daily, in 1985, he moved to Chicago.

In Chicago, Rodriguez's career took off. He published two books of poems, *Poems Across the Pavement* and *The Concrete River*, both of which won prestigious literary awards. He founded Tia Chucha Press, a company dedicated to publishing the works of young, mostly minority literary voices.

In 1993, Rodriguez wrote *Always Running* and dedicated the book to 25 close friends who died during his days in Las Lomas. He also wrote the book as a gift to his own son, Ramiro, who had moved to Chicago to live with Rodriguez as a teenager but soon thereafter joined a gang. Rodriguez was unable to keep Ramiro from following in his footsteps. In 1997, Ramiro was convicted of attempted murder and sentenced to 28 years in prison.

The tragedy of losing Ramiro to "La Vida Loca" brought Rodriguez's whole family closer together and helped crystallize for Rodriguez what he wanted to do next with his life.

"I tried to save Ramiro but he saved me," says Rodriguez, referring to the fact that he has become a more attentive father to his children (he has two other children, 10-year-old Ruben and 4-year-old Rodriguez Jacinto) and a better husband to his wife Trini. He has finally stopped drinking and has poured his heart and soul into Youth Struggling for Survival ("YSS"), a program he founded to help Ramiro and other gang members transcend violence and gang involvement.

YSS is Rodriguez's attempt to replicate the type of mentoring program developed by Ramirez a generation earlier in East L.A. Through the program, which involves 15 youth and eight adults, Rodriguez aims to help young people take charge of their lives. The program builds trusting and respectful relationships between youth and elders, exposes the youth to a heavy dose of the arts and culture and empowers them by giving them leadership roles in keeping the peace within the community.

Ramiro's experience has also inspired Rodriguez to step up his advocacy efforts on behalf of youth. He now speaks out forcefully against many of today's policies, like trying children as adults. "Youth is youth for a good reason" says Rodriguez. When youth commit murder, "it is a grave crime" but it is not "an adult crime."

"Youth are very malleable and it is society's obligation to try to change them. I am living proof of the capacity for change." ❖

Senator Alan Simpson

Age: 67

Occupation: Director, Institute of Politics, Harvard University. Former U.S. Senator (R- WY), 1978-1996.

Residence: Boston, Massachusetts; Cody, Wyoming.

Education: Bachelors and Law Degrees from the University of Wyoming, and several honorary degrees from universities around the country.

Delinquency History: Served two years on probation for destruction of federal property (vandalized mailboxes); shoplifting; arrested for breaching the peace as a young adult.

At the kick-off rally for his 1978 campaign for the U.S. Senate in Jackson, Alan Simpson spied a familiar face in the sea of people near the stage. Simpson waded into the crowd to meet his old friend, J.B. Mosley, and asked him to join his family and campaign workers around the podium. Modestly, Mosley declined the offer. "This is your day," he told the would-be Senator. But Simpson could not let the moment pass. After his introductory remarks, Simpson told the crowd there was someone present who had a great influence in his life and had helped him to make it to this moment: his probation officer, J.B. Mosley. The crowd was surprised, but also quite moved. "I tell you, I think I got every vote in that building," Simpson says with a chuckle.

The ex-Senator and one-time assistant Republican Leader of the upper chamber fondly remembers the caring relationship he shared with Mosley during a time when Simpson describes himself as being "on the edge."

When he was 17, after he pled guilty to charges of destroying federal property by shooting mailboxes, Simpson met Mosley while serving out a two-year term on probation. Today, Simpson says this second chance helped him to become an attorney and to go on to politics, capped off by serving 18 years in the U.S. Senate. At 67, Simpson continues his commitment to public life as Director of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and also teaching at the graduate level. Discussing America's juvenile justice system, Simpson is as enigmatic as he was in the Senate. While he is disappointed with "do gooders" in the juvenile justice system who are often "snowed" by "cunning juveniles," he is also critical of the demonization of youth by the media, and of the mandatory sentences that are often robbing kids of the kind of second chances he had.

"Anybody in our society—unless they are totally out to lunch—can understand that a guy of 22 or 25 is not the same guy of 17," Simpson says. "I don't know what they [the juvenile justice system] are doing right, but it is sure a lot more right than what they were doing wrong."

Alan Simpson, whose father Milward L. Simpson was governor and U.S. Senator from Wyoming, grew up in a loving, stable home in Cody, Wyoming. His mother, Lorna, once told *Time* magazine that "Alan did have a temper," and she recalled punishing him for throwing rocks at other kids.

"My mother was near tears half the time while I was growing up, because of my always being on the edge," Simpson says.

He and his friends graduated from throwing rocks to playing with 22 caliber rifles at a nearby ravine. The boys would fire off rounds at each other, bouncing bullets off the rocks, just to see how close they could get without actually hitting each other. The game, Simpson says with remarkable understatement, "is rather hazardous, actually!" To play, Simpson and his friends sometimes stole 22 rifle shells from local hardware stores. Later, when he and his friends were older, Simpson returned money to one of the stores he shoplifted, cutting and pasting a message on the envelope in newspaper letters which read, "we did wrong, here's your bucks."

When he was 17, he and four of his friends loaded into his family's second car, an old Nash and drove off to shoot at mailboxes on a dusty rural road. "I was a crack shot," says Simpson. He hit a number of targets, blasting holes in the mail. But he says one of his less accurate friends killed a cow hidden in a willow patch. They also shot up a road grader.

When the postmaster asked around, he began hearing descriptions of five kids making much noise, exploding fire crackers and firing off shots, all from a vehicle resembling Milward Simpson's car. Alan Simpson soon confessed, and he and the four other boys pled guilty to destroying federal property in the Cheyenne federal court. As it was their first known offense, the judge sentenced them to 2 years probation and ordered them to make restitution for the mailboxes, the road grader and the dead cow. Mosley was assigned to monitor Simpson and the other miscreants.

"Anybody in society, unless they are totally out to lunch, can understand that a guy of 22 or 25 is not the guy of 17."

Simpson remembers the distressing looks his parents gave each other. "They must have thought, 'Where have we failed'," he says. "My mother was looking at my father, my father at my mother. My father cried too, and I do remember that because I hadn't seen him do that before," Simpson says.

For the next two years, J.B. Mosley visited Simpson and his friends whenever he made the trip into Cody, even seeing them at home, in the pool hall, at school and on the basketball court. Simpson remembers Mosley being a wonderful guy who would sit down with him, asking him how he was doing in school, keeping tabs on Simpson's success on the high school basketball team and his scholastic work.

"I didn't know him intimately, but I did know that he cared about me," says Simpson. "He paid attention to me, and I

liked him very much. He didn't preach...he listened."

Everyone in town knew about the incident and jokes about it followed him through high school. Kids would call into a local radio station request line to have the old country western song, "There's a hole in my mailbox," dedicated to Simpson. But the attention he and his friends received from his probation officer made a difference in his and his friends' lives. Of the four other mailbox shooters, Simpson says one became a school teacher and principal, another became a school administrator, and one worked in the space industry. "Another died in his youth, but every one of the others went on to a successful life," he says.

"They would call and say, 'I didn't think you had the guts to come back to this town after what you did around here.' And I would say, 'Well, everybody gets a second chance.'"

Simpson was the only one of the group to get into trouble again as an adult. When he was 21, he got into a shoving match with a drunken friend in Laramie, Wyoming. A police officer, who mistook the shoving for a fight, cracked Simpson's head with a billy club and Simpson lashed back. "A real mistake!" Simpson states dryly. The police made him spend the night in jail. He and the friend were charged with breaching the peace, and he was released on a $300 fine. His parents found out, and he again earned the anguish of his father.

"The older you get, the more you realize their disappointment is so real," Simpson says. "But you also come to realize your own attitude is stupefying, and arrogant, and cocky, and a miserable way to live."

From then on, Simpson went straight. He graduated with a bachelors degree in 1954 and married his girlfriend, Ann Schroll, now his wife of 45 years. After a stint in the army in Germany, he attained a law degree from the University of Wyoming in 1958. He worked in his dad's law firm for 18 years in Cody. As he and Ann raised three children (Bill and Colin became lawyers and Susan is a commercial art dealer), Simpson was often appointed by the courts to represent juvenile delinquents and was frequently approached by parents who knew his history with the law. One of the kids whose case he handled was an 18-year-old who stole a car and drove it to Seattle. The man later became Simpson's chief of staff.

"Some were surprised when I was back to Cody to practice," he says. "They would see me and say, 'I didn't think you had the guts to come back to this town after all you did around here.' And I would just smile and say, 'Well, everybody gets a second chance.'"

When he worked juvenile cases, Simpson believed in tough love, and tough talk. "I'd go right for the jugular. 'Look you big baby, I'm going to tell you about the real world, and if you don't like it, you'll end up being as important as someone's spit in the breeze.' Sometimes, the only way to get their attention is to use profanity, whether you are at Harvard University or in the jail with a client in Cody."

After nearly 13 years in the Wyoming legislature rising from majority whip to majority leader to speaker "pro-tem," Simpson took his father's Senate seat in Washington. Over his 18 years in the capitol, he held the second highest leadership position within the Senate GOP, while staking out some rather libertarian positions. He is a strong defender of abortion rights, for sensible immigration policies and supports the "decriminalization" ("not legalization," he says) of marijuana.

His thoughts on the criminal justice system are harder to peg. He strongly believes in giving kids a second chance and that one's youthful crimes should be put in their proper perspective by thoughtful people. But he also supports the court's discretion in making juvenile records widely available.

"I say, expose more of the ornery little lawbreakers," he says. "It sure got my attention when I knew people knew about me!"

Still, he acknowledges how that system leads to abuse. He is pained by the stories of people who smoked marijuana as kids, and then, 15 years later, are barred from joining the FBI and law enforcement. In 1991, when Simpson earned the ire of women's groups for his strident, some would say belligerent, questioning of Anita Hill during the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings, the specter of his past delinquency hung over him.

"Remember, she wasn't charging him with sexual harassment—she just wanted us to be aware of his behavior," Simpson says. "So, suddenly, from eight years back comes a guided missile aimed at Thomas' brain," he says.

The ex-Senator seems to have an unwavering sense that most kids will rise past their youthful indiscretions, despite the 'do gooders.'

"I just bristled, because, I thought of the fact that I had been on federal probation for two years—so many years ago," he says. "I thought, this is violently unfair. This reminds me of what could have happened to me."

His stormy relationship with the media also influences his view of the way reporters cover juvenile crime.

"The media will always portray the barbarism and the viciousness of the worst ones," he says. "The 11-year-old who assaults and kills the little girl in a back lot....yes, that's shocking enough but then you find out, well, it might not have been the 11-year-old at all. The high drama of the 24-hour news cycle have many of them portrayed as monsters."

And yet, the ex-Senator seems to have an unwavering sense that most kids will—and do—rise past their youthful indiscretions, despite the "do gooders." He recalls the story of a kid who came before him while he was a city attorney. Along with a group of other children, the boy assaulted a Spanish teacher on the streets of Cody, hurling broken bottles and racial slurs at him. Simpson recalls that the parents of all the boys could not believe that their "little dears" could have committed such a crude and cruel act. Always the iconoclast and believing that brutal honesty is the best policy, Simpson put the teacher up on the stand, "to tell every word and describe every action."

"Oh, God, it was wonderful to look at these doting parents and see them all squirm," he says, again with a chuckle. "They couldn't believe their children would do that. Those boys all went on to various degrees of success. All did well. Now, there was a lot of stuff to their rehabilitation, and I'm not a shrink, but those who do turn it all around with the great help of others—I say God bless 'em!" ❖

Derrick Thomas[3]

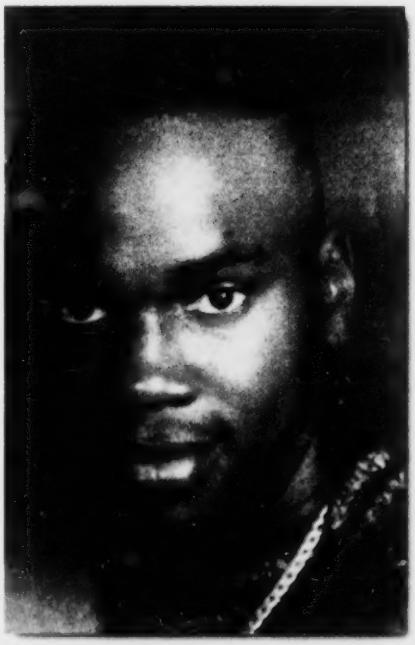
Age: 32 (deceased)

Former Occupation: Linebacker, Kansas City Chiefs; Founder, Third and Long Foundation, a program to help inner-city children learn how to read.

Former Residence: Kansas City, Missouri.

Education: University of Alabama, major in criminal justice and social work.

Delinquency History: Burglary and auto-theft. Referred to juvenile detention for 30 days, and sent to the Dade Marine Institute, an alternative school for youth for six months. Court ordered restitution on a charge of auto-theft when he was 18.



Tears rained down his face as his mother cradled 14-year-old Derrick Thomas, already over six feet tall, in her arms. After years of beating the system, of committing crimes and not getting caught, of conning adults with his engaging smile and winning personality, Thomas' number had finally come up. He was going to juvenile jail.

Placed on home confinement while awaiting trial on a burglary charge, his first juvenile court referral, Thomas repeatedly left the house. His pre-trial services officer, Ms. Gibson, had reached her breaking point. She pulled Thomas out of class and summoned him and his mother to her office to break the bad news. For the next 30 days, Thomas was going to be locked up in juvenile hall.

At the time, "getting locked up seemed like the worst thing that could happen to me," says Thomas, who went on to become a ten-time All-Pro Linebacker for the Kansas City Chiefs and one of the N.F.L.'s all time sack leaders. But getting involved in the juvenile justice system actually turned out to be "one of the most important breaks I ever got." Through the court, Thomas would meet several people who helped him turn his life around. His juvenile court experiences led him to set up his own foundation for troubled inner-city youths and inspired him to use his life to make a difference on behalf of other troubled youths.

Thomas was born in Miami, Florida on New Year's Day, 1967. He was raised by his mother Edith and his grandmother Annie Addams in Perrine, a middle-class neighborhood in Dade County. Soon after Thomas was born, his father, Robert Thomas, enlisted in the Air Force, rising through the ranks to become one of a select few black pilots. Around Christmas 1972, just before Thomas' sixth birthday, Capt. Robert Thomas' B-52 plane was shot down during a bombing mission over North Vietnam. First thought to be "missing in action," Capt. Thomas was finally declared "legally dead" in 1980, shortly before Thomas' 13th birthday.

It was around this time that Thomas started getting into trouble. He began to hang around with some boys from Circle Plaza, the housing projects on the other side of the large park which divided those with means from those without. Four of the boys were his cousins and the rest he had known since elementary school or had met at the park where he and all the other local teens spent their free time.

Ironically, Thomas' delinquency came at a time when he had all the material possessions he wanted. The Air Force had compensated him for his father's death, and Thomas used his share to buy bikes, mopeds, sports equipment and many other fashionable luxuries that other teens craved.

"I wasn't content with having everything, that was too easy," said Thomas. So he began acquiring things the hard way by stealing them. According to Thomas, his crew "could raise or lower the crime rate of Perrine on any given day if they chose to." He and his friends started stealing bikes, moved to mopeds, then motorcycles, and finally cars. Along the way, the group collected their own arsenal of weapons because "every time we stole a car there was a weapon in it."

Thomas' delinquency also occurred as he began to blossom as an athlete. He excelled in all sports but was especially adept at football and track. He was also a competitive BMX bike racer, rising to the rank of top rider in his age group in the State of Florida. Between sports and school, Thomas was busy, but when unsupervised and with his peers, trouble was never far away.

It was with his peers that Thomas picked up his first and only juvenile charge. Towards the end of 9th grade, Thomas and three of his friends planned to burglarize a home in the affluent section of town. Neighbors spotted the boys entering the home and called the police. After a long foot chase, Thomas was caught as he tried to cross a park. He was taken to the juvenile detention center, where he remained for a day before appearing in court.

According to Derrick, his crew "could raise and lower the crime rate on any given day if they chose to."

To Thomas, his first overnight stay at the detention center was no big deal.

"I knew everybody there and was pretty sure I'd be going home because I was a first-time offender," he said. His first court appearance was also uneventful and brief. A trial date was set, and he was set free but placed on home confinement. When he promptly violated the conditions of his release, however, his pretrial officer had him locked up.

[3] We regret to report that Derrick Thomas died on February 8, 2000, from complications following an automobile accident. His spirit and contributions live on in his Third and Long Foundation.

"When Ms. Gibson told me I was going to be locked up, I cried and cried and cried to my mama," said Thomas. "Reality hit. I wasn't going home tomorrow."

His stint in detention was more painful. He got into several fights and spent some time in solitary confinement. Things got much worse before they got better. While in detention, he was assigned a counselor, Ms. Judy Gordon, who met with Thomas and told him that she was recommending he be sent to Dade Marine Institute (DMI), an alternative day school, in lieu of straight probation.

DMI was a favorite program of Judge William Gladstone, the juvenile court judge who presided over Thomas' case. Judge Gladstone accepted Ms. Gordon's recommendation. As Thomas was leaving the courtroom, in words which turned out to be prophetic, Thomas' Public Defender said to him, "I'm going to buy you some gloves for Christmas so you don't leave any of your fingerprints any place."

"When [they] told me I was going to be locked up, I cried and cried and cried to my mama . . . . Reality hit. I wasn't going home tomorrow."

Thomas was despondent over being sent to DMI because it meant that he couldn't play football. But he soon took to the program and began to excel. He developed a special bond with the Director, Nick Millar, a collegiate wrestler, and his group counselor, Carl Lewis, a medical student who worked at DMI when not in school. They helped Thomas believe that he could play college football and get his degree. The program, which featured incentives for students who completed assigned tasks, inspired Thomas. He learned to set short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals, and he charted his daily progress. There was plenty of fun at the program as well, including canoe trips and scuba diving excursions, novel and challenging experiences for inner-city kids who rarely ventured outside their neighborhoods.

Most of the boys stayed at DMI for two or three years, earned their GEDs and stayed out of trouble—82% of those in Thomas' group did not re-offend. Thomas, however, had higher ambitions. He wanted to go back to South Miami, get his high school diploma and get a football scholarship to college. He finished the program in record time—approximately four months—and soon reenrolled at South Miami High.

Back at South Miami, Thomas lettered in four sports: baseball, football, basketball, and track. After playing tight-end and running back his junior year, a linebacker spot opened up before his senior year. He seized the opportunity and earned All-League Honors. The scholarship offers began rolling in. He chose the University of Alabama and signed a letter of intent. All he had to do was finish the school year without incident.

But a lapse in judgment almost cost Thomas everything. A few days after his senior prom, some of Thomas' buddies decided to steal a car for old times' sake. Thomas met up with them later and allowed them to store some of the stripped parts in his car. Later that evening, he began to have misgivings. He remembered his Public Defender's parting words, and feared he might have left his fingerprints on the stolen car. He convinced several friends, including one who also had a full athletic scholarship, to go back and wipe down the car. The police were there waiting.

Now eighteen, Thomas was an adult as far as the law was concerned. He and his friends spent a day in the county jail. When he finally got to court, he was greeted by the same PD who had represented him in juvenile court. Standing before the judge, his head bowed in shame, Thomas caught one final break. The judge ordered him to make restitution and told him "if I ever see you again, I'm going to give you the time you came for and the time I didn't give you this time." Thomas bolted from the court and never looked back.

At Alabama, Thomas became one of the most dominant defensive players in the country. Regarded as the nation's finest pass-rusher, Thomas set a school record with a total of 52 quarterback sacks. In 1988, his senior year, he won the coveted Dick Butkus award as the top linebacker in the country. Thomas was the first round draft pick of the Kansas City Chiefs and the fourth pick overall in the draft, following Troy Aikman, Tony Mandarich, and Barry Sanders.

Thomas had a stellar career with the Chiefs, making All-Pro each of his 10 years in the league, becoming the Chief's all-time sack leader and surpassing the 100-sack milestone faster than any other linebacker in league history.

"The stigma that is put on kids in the juvenile justice system is wrong; every kid is not a bad kid . . . all they need is an opportunity."

His on the field efforts were eclipsed by his charitable efforts off the field. Early on at Alabama, while majoring in criminal justice and social work, Thomas vowed that he would "try to make a difference" by working with kids in the juvenile justice system. In his first year after joining the Chiefs, Thomas contacted Judge Gladstone seeking advice on how he could help kids. Judge Gladstone told Thomas that there were many programs for kids once they got in trouble, especially children who were over 13, but a real need for prevention programs for kids aged 9 to 13.

With help from Judge Gladstone and others, Thomas founded the Third and Long Foundation, a program dedicated to helping inner-city children improve their reading skills. Over the years, the program has grown to provide social, cultural, recreational, and educational opportunities to 58 children in three Kansas City middle schools. During the summer, the kids attend an outdoor summer camp with character building activities modeled after some of those Thomas experienced at DMI. Thomas' community service activities earned him the NFL's most prestigious service awards, including the NFL Edge Man of the Year and the Byron "Whizzer" White Humanitarian Award. Former President George Bush chose Thomas as the 832nd out of his 1,000 "Points of Light"—the only NFL Player to be so honored.

Thomas became a powerful advocate for delinquent children; in 1991 he testified before a Congressional Subcommittee on Crime and Criminal Justice, asking for an increase in prevention funding. Following this appearance, he became the first non-Supreme Court Justice to address the Missouri General Assembly, urging State lawmakers to provide Missouri children with the same opportunities that he had through DMI. In reflecting upon his experiences, Thomas was quick to credit the juvenile justice system as having made "all the

difference" in his life. "If I could do one thing to improve it, I'd want every kid in the system to have the chance to go through a program like DMI."

Thomas especially valued the fact that his past was kept confidential and that it was his choice to reveal it: "Unless I give you my background, you have no reason to view me as other than the nice guy that I've presented myself as to you," he said. "The stigma this puts on kids in the juvenile justice system is wrong; every kid is not a bad kid, they may do bad things, but all they need is an opportunity. The juvenile justice system gave me that second chance."

In public speaking engagements, Derrick told audiences the same thing he said in testimony before the United States Congress and the Missouri General Assembly, words which are a fitting epilogue to this profile: "I come to you today to say you can make a difference and to tell you that there are any number of success stories in the juvenile justice system, just like mine," he said. ❖

Hon. Reggie B. Walton

Age: 50

Occupation: D.C. Superior Court Judge since 1981. Former U.S. prosecutor, Deputy "Drug Czar," and Senior White House Advisor on Crime to President George Bush.

Residence: Washington, D.C.

Education: West Virginia State, American University's Washington College of Law.

Delinquency History: Adjudicated delinquent three times in juvenile court for fighting while a teen.

They call it "the Home of Champions." The small, otherwise obscure town of Donora, Pennsylvania is where Ken Griffey, Sr., Stan Musial and a host of other fine athletes went to high school. In fact, current star, Ken Griffey, Jr., was born in Donora and started his baseball career as a little leaguer there.

It's also where Judge Reggie Walton—a former federal prosecutor and America's first Deputy Drug Czar—grew up. Walton had dreams of playing professional football and even received an athletic scholarship to West Virginia State College—but not before three court appearances as a kid for fighting in what he describes as the "tough little steel mill towns" dotting the Monongahela River. One of the fights the future-judge was involved in could have resulted in the victim's death, and served as a wake up call, setting him on a course for a stellar legal and political career.

When Reggie Walton was born in 1949, his father, Theodore Walton, was a steel worker like so many Donora residents, and his mother, Ruth Walton, was a housewife. Walton came from an intact family, which was plunged into financial stress when the local steel mill closed in 1960, and his father was laid off.

"At first, my father couldn't get a job, and there were no job opportunities for black females in those days," he explains. "Besides, my parents thought it was best if my mother stayed home and raised the three of us."

Theodore Walton was paid $900 in severance when the mill closed, $50 for each year he worked there. And there was no work to be had in, or anywhere near, Donora. Since these were the days before food stamps, Walton remembers his family relying on surplus food provided by the government and what his father grew on a piece of land he had cleared.

Reggie Walton was working by the time he was 10, selling newspapers on a street corner from 7:00 to 11:30. He later took a 4:30 a.m. paper job along with an after-school paper job working both from the time he was 12-years-old until he graduated from high school. Between football practice and work, "I didn't get a lot of sleep during those days," he says with a smile.

A few years after he lost his job in the steelmill, Theodore Walton got a job as a janitor in the Pittsburgh Gimble's Department Store and a second job at night.

"I hardly ever saw my father when he was working those two jobs," says Walton. "And I started to get out of control, not listening to my mother, my machismo started to take over."

Walton's machismo manifested itself in fighting on more than one occasion. And, on more than one occasion, the police got involved.

"Those steel towns were tough little towns," he says. "There were a lot of bars and a lot of brawls and you had to be prepared to fight, or you had no manhood. Many of my former friends are either dead, or have been, or are currently in prison, or on drugs or abusing alcohol."

Ironically, although Walton readily admits to his involvement in the fights for which he appeared in court, his first encounter with the police was for a crime he did not commit.

"The principal benefit I derived from the juvenile justice system was the confidentiality of my record, which meant that my youthful indiscretions didn't prevent me from getting a football scholarship to college or from becoming a lawyer."

"The first time I was detained was a classic false arrest," he relates. "Some other young black male had stolen something off a delivery truck. The guy who did it looked nothing like me. I remember being angry about being suspected of committing the crime because the actual perpetrator was one of the ugliest guys in town," Walton says with a smile. "The only reason I was detained is because I was a young black male."

Walton's first two real encounters with the law—in the ninth and eleventh grades—were for fighting. Some of the fights Walton was involved in were over a girl while attending a dance.

"You ask anyone, and they'll tell you I'm tough on crime," he states. "And I have no problem sending someone away for a long time if I think it's necessary. But for a great many of these kids, they need a chance and an opportunity to turn themselves around."

"I didn't go to an actual court for any of my cases," he recalls. "They held hearings right in the police station, with no lawyers. I just represented myself. Of course, in all three cases, I did not prevail. Two of the court encounters resulted in verbal reprimands and the third a referral to juvenile probation."

"I received nothing from the juvenile authorities by way of supervision," Walton remembers. "But I got plenty of supervision at home, so I didn't really need it. The principal benefit I derived from the juvenile system was the confidentiality of my record, which meant that my youthful indiscretions didn't prevent me from getting a football scholarship to college or from becoming a lawyer."

As a high school junior, Walton discovered his father's guns and his straight razor and started sneaking them out of the house tucked into his pants. Fortunately, Walton was never arrested carrying the weapons. In fact, he never displayed the weapons in anger or threatened to use them.

"Back in those days, you thought you were a big man if you were merely carrying a gun and could show it off," he says. "But if you used it instead of your fists, you were considered a punk."

Around this time, Theodore Walton got tired of his son's behavior and disrespect for Mrs. Walton. Reggie Walton considers it a turning point in his life when his father literally grabbed him by his shirt collar and ominously threatened that there was going to be a serious price to pay the next time the younger Walton disrespected or failed to obey his mother.

Despite his troubles with the law, and his minimal academic performance in high school, Walton continued to excel on his high school's football team as its starting halfback. His play on the gridiron resulted in athletic scholarship offers to a number of colleges, including West Virginia State College, which he ultimately attended—but not before one final serious crime nearly derailed his career and his life, and threatened the life of another.

"We had heard that there were some guys up at the projects, messing with some of our girls," Walton remembers. "So we all piled into a truck to find them and teach them a lesson."

Walton assumed that they were just going to rough these guys up and leave it at that. But when they tracked one of the kids down and started beating him up, one of the boys Walton was with took out an ice pick and started stabbing the unsuspecting boy.

Walton's rise in the legal profession from that point can only be described as meteoric. He became the Chief of the Career Criminal Unit in the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1979 at the age of 30, and during his time in that post, he never lost a case. At the age of 32, he was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to the D.C. Superior Court, the second youngest judge ever appointed to the district bench.

Although he was stabbed nine times, the victim did not die, partly because Walton and a friend rushed him to a hospital. The victim had nine puncture wounds in his back and a broken nose and jaw. When Walton learned that the boy's parents had no car, he drove to their home, picked them up, and took them to the hospital.

The next day, the police questioned Walton, who was deliberately vague about his involvement in the beating. At the time, his cousin, Ronnie Neal, was in town for a visit. Walton and Neal left town the next day for Middletown, New York. Walton assumed that, once the police caught the boy who committed the stabbing (who was himself shot and killed over a girl several years later) his problems were over. His assumption proved to be correct.

"I saw my whole future flash before my eyes at that time," Walton relates. "It really had a profound effect on me." Walton has never been in trouble since that time.

In Middletown that summer, Walton repeatedly locked horns with his older cousin, Julius Neal, who himself had had some troubles as a youth and who saw Walton heading down a dangerous path.

"Julius and I fought all the time about my behavior," Walton remembers.

"'You're gonna blow it if you go to college and get into this type of trouble,' he would tell me."

At West Virginia State, Walton made a conscious decision to enter a scholarly fraternity, as opposed to one full of athletes. He chose the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity because it had a reputation for turning out black leaders like Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, and Adam Clayton Powell.

Walton struggled at first in college, not so much due to lack of ability—as subsequent achievements would attest—but because he had never focused on academics until attending college. But he worked hard and made Dean's List in his senior year.

Still, with a poor showing on the law boards, his chance of attending law school appeared slim. Fortunately, he was enrolled in a program established by the federal government, the Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO), which was specifically designed to increase the number of black attorneys, who constituted about only 2 percent of America's lawyers at that time.

In 1971, CLEO sent Walton to an intensive summer-long program at Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C. He graduated near the top of the class, earning an academic scholarship to American University's Washington College of Law.

Law school did not come easy for Walton, who had to study 12 to 13 hours a day, in addition to the various jobs he worked to supplement his scholarship and loans. He graduated in 1974 and took a job as a public defender in Philadelphia. He left that job for a position at D.C.'s United States Attorney's Office in 1976.

Walton's rise in the legal profession from that point can only be described as meteoric. He became the Chief of the Career Criminal Unit in the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1979 at the age of 30, and during his time in that post, he never lost a case. He was promoted to Executive Assistant to D.C.'s U.S. Attorney—the number three position in the office—a year later. At the age of 32, he was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to the D.C. Superior Court, the second youngest judge ever appointed to the D.C. bench.

Eight years after he became a judge, Walton was introduced to William Bennett, the new Drug Czar, by his brother Bob Bennett who knew Walton from his work in the U.S. Attorney's Office. William Bennett had been appointed by President George Bush to head the brand new Office of National Drug Control Policy, and his brother had gathered a few knowledgeable colleagues to offer their thoughts about drugs and crime at an informal get-together.

"I told him that, I don't mean to say that only minorities are involved with drugs," Walton says. "But that they are disproportionately involved. You're going to need a minority at the top level of your administration, if you want to have credibility on this issue in minority communities."

A few weeks later, William Bennett called Judge Walton and, much to Walton's surprise, offered him the number two spot in the Drug Czar's office.

Walton spent the next two years traveling over a half-million miles, spreading the Bush Administration's anti-drug message across the country. When Florida Governor Bob Martinez took over as Drug Czar in 1991, Walton was made the Senior White House Advisor on Crime to President Bush and was then reappointed by Bush to the D.C. Superior Court.

Although he's only 50 years old, Walton is already talking about the time, a few years from now, when he will be eligible for a reduced case load and senior status as a judge. But that's not because he wants to take it easy. With his new free time, he hopes to start a residential school for delinquent and otherwise at-risk youth, to work with young people who, like himself, hold promise for the future that is just waiting to be tapped.

"You ask anyone, and they'll tell you I'm tough on crime," he states. "And I have no problem sending someone away for a long time if I think it's necessary. But for a great many of these kids, they need a chance and an opportunity to turn themselves around."

"A lot of proposals have come out to just lock 'em up and throw away the key," he states. "But the vast majority of these young people are going to be back on the street sooner or later and we had better think of ways to help them turn their lives around or they're going to wreak havoc on us." ❖

Lawrence Wu

Age: 23

Occupation: Corporate Tax Lawyer, former editor, The Columbia University Law Review.

Residence: New York, New York.

Education: State University of New York (Binghamton); The Columbia University School of Law.

Delinquency History: Arrested for attempted murder, fighting and other crimes relating to his involvement with an Asian gang. Spent a few days in a New York City jail cell and a brief period on probation.

It was a simple plan. Lawrence Wu would walk down a street in New York City, trying to look like an ordinary kid as he managed to hide a gun up his sleeve. If the then 15-year-old saw any members of a rival Chinatown gang, his orders were to shoot them dead, and to toss the gun into another gang's neighborhood. He would then hop a cab to Times Square where he would meet someone from his gang to smuggle him out of the city.

For an hour, he paced up and down the rival gang's territory. "I was so nervous, and I thought, I'm not standing around here for another split-second with a gun up my sleeve. I'm getting out of here." Realizing how unprepared he was for gang-assigned killing missions, he later fired off a couple of practice shots inside the gang hangout.

"My ear was shaking, and my arm nearly flew off," Wu says. "I would have been stunned by my own shot. Looking back now, I know I would have gotten caught. It was such a stupid plan."

As a student at Columbia University School of Law, Lawrence Wu knows the waiver provisions in New York State that could have changed his life forever. He knows now, kids as young as 13 who are charged with murder are automatically sent to adult criminal court in New York, and if found guilty, face long prison terms.

"I was lucky in the sense that any different set of circumstances could have led to a very different result," Wu says.

Luck, and the law, allowed him to leave his street uniform of spiked, bleached hair and black leather jackets behind him. Today, wearing neatly pressed khaki pants and a dress shirt, the 23-year-old is at the top of Columbia's academic heap. Wu is editor-in-chief of the Columbia Law Review, one of the most prestigious law journals in the country, and is about to embark on a career in corporate law. But he counts his blessings. "I think it is definitely true that a system of second and third chances is very important," Wu says. "I know that from my own life."

Getting to the Ivy League should have been easier for Wu. The son of Chinese immigrants who had degrees in engineering, law, and library sciences, both he and his two older brothers passed the test to gain entrance to Stuyvesant High School—one of three top New York institutions that skims the cream of the crop out of the city's public schools. While earning straight A's in elementary school, family life became "dysfunctional" in his early teens after his father left home,

saddling his mother with managing the home, and raising him.

"We suddenly became lower middle class," he says. "It always seemed like we were teetering on bankruptcy." Starting in junior high, and continuing in high school, Wu's grades began to slip. He moved neighborhoods—from schools where he was the only Asian child (and often, the target of racial taunts)—to a high school where half the kids were Asian, and where joining one of the half-dozen gangs was considered an instant jump to "coolness."

A student at The Columbia University School of Law, Lawrence Wu knows the waiver provisions in New York State that could have changed his life forever. He knows now, kids as young as 13 who are charged with murder are automatically sent to adult criminal court.

"They were universally feared by everyone, and I thought, this is wild and fun, and I started hanging out with these kids," Wu says.

When he returned home with some low grades, his mother promptly kicked him out of her house, and he gradually dropped out of school, and gravitated towards the gangster life.

Lawrence Wu chose to join one of the city's many Asian gangs, and became a foot soldier for an international triad that ran gambling, prostitution, and enforcement syndicates from New York to Hong Kong. Killing missions, like the failed run, were rare events. One other time, he waited in a movie theater to execute some rival gang members, but they never showed up. Instead, Wu earned $80 a week from his Dai Lo ("big brother") to watch his territory, shake down store owners, deliver his packages ("I suspect they were drugs and guns, but I didn't ask"), and be available for fighting.

Most of the time, Wu said, the gang gambled and partied, "wasted time, and looked for trouble." Eventually, trouble found him. His first contact with court came when he was the sole gang member arrested when the police broke up a fight. "I had an injury from the day before, so I was limping away while everyone was running," he says. He was held at the police station on 23rd St. until his mother came and had him released to her custody.

While on probation, he met a juvenile probation officer who graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School—one of New York's three specialized high schools, along with Stuyvesant. "We had an instant connection, and because I was from Stuyvesant, he said there couldn't be a big problem," he says. "That was the last I heard of the charge."

He was arrested for fighting a second time in Flushing, Queens. "They never asked for ID, so I gave a false name, and put down my grandmother's address," Wu says. "I never heard of it again, and for all I know, I could have a big fine accruing."

The game he played with the law caught up with Wu when he was arrested as an accomplice in a brutal beating of someone he thought was a rival gang member. "One of my friends had a lock, put his finger through the ring, and we walloped this guy with a "fist of fury," and basically bashed his head to a pulp," he says. The injuries were so serious, the police arrested him in Chinatown and charged him with attempted murder. Not only was the charge serious, but this time Wu was arrested and held by Chinatown police—a precinct that had a reputation for being particularly brutal with the young Chinese gangs.

"It is hard to have a general rule of culpability when there are so many individual circumstances."

Before they took him to the station, Wu says the police beat him and his friend in the back of their car. "They know where to hit people without making marks: the neck, the solar plexus, and they hit you with their elbows, so they don't get marks," he says. "They knew they couldn't shut us down, so this was their way of finding equilibrium, and menacing us." He was held in a dingy, dark adult jail cell for two days with the other kids, and tells of one of the officers who handed him a cheese sandwich after rubbing it against the railing of the cell.

His mother got him a lawyer, who told him there was a chance he could go to jail for a couple of years. He was released to his mother's custody, and in the intervening weeks, the person he had beaten recovered, and did not suffer any serious long-term health consequences, and the charges were dropped.

Wu says the whole experience was a catalyst for him to leave the gang. "It scared the bejesus out of me, and my other friends started talking about going to college and stuff like that," Wu says. "It made me feel like, this gangster stuff is getting old."

However, Lawrence Wu knew, you don't just leave a gang. One built-in safeguard is that he had used a false name with his gang, and they did not know where his mother lived. At about the same time, people in his gang started getting killed, or arrested in an FBI sting operation. "A year later, there was an article showing that twenty-five high up members of the gang were sent to jail," he says. "Before that, a rival gang started this war campaign against us, and people started dying. I was lucky I got out when I did," he says.

But not lucky enough, he points out, to avoid getting beaten up by members of a rival gang at a party, even though he said he was no longer in the gang, and was dressing like "a preppy, college person," trying to blend in.

He never looked back after that. Wu moved back in with his mother, got a job as a teller at Chemical Bank, and began the process of catching up in school. He took his GED, and got accepted to Queens College, and eventually made up his lost years. "I was excited about college, and I studied hard, but I had a small English vocabulary, and I had to learn how to write again," he says. "I was reading words like 'polemic,' and I had to look up what they meant."

As he transferred to more prestigious schools, first to New York University, and then to the State University of New York at Binghamton, he wrestled with his newfound faith as a Christian. For a time, he thought of becoming a missionary, and became a youth leader in a Chinatown church and at his college.

During his time as a Christian, he began to think about the damage and pain he caused his family, particularly his mother. "I noticed how much she seemed to have aged over the nearly two years I was

gone," Wu says. "It saddened me to think how the whole experience exacted a tremendous toll on my mother." His mother invited him back in, no questions asked, helping him make the transition from gang life, to school. In university, Wu's studies centered on rationalistic philosophy and biblical criticism. He found it increasingly difficult to intellectually justify his faith.

"Based on my experiences, I can say that a system of second chances is necessary."

Eventually, Wu says he found it impossible to maintain both his intellectual convictions and his traditional faith, and he "unconverted." Shortly after Wu's unconversion, he reunited with his high school sweetheart whom he dated when he was a gangster. He chose Columbia Law School over Harvard because he was certain they were going to get married and he wanted to stay close to her in New York. His decision paid off, as they got married before his second year of law school.

Lawrence Wu put in 40 to 100 hours a week as editor-in-chief of the Columbia University Law Review—one of the greatest honors a student can receive in the school. He oversaw every step of the production of one of the nation's most prestigious law journals. "I tried to see that every single piece was substantively better," he says.

When asked what he thinks of the recent spate of tough-on-crime juvenile justice legislation—laws that would have made his own reclamation more difficult—Wu soberly deliberates over the competing legal values. "I know a lot of people from the gang that I would want to see locked up," he says. "They really are irredeemable. But it is hard to have a general rule of culpability when there are so many individual circumstances. It's hard to say where the line should be drawn." He says he is hesitant to say anything on public policy unless he has enough information, and dislikes the common tendency to make rash judgments. But it doesn't take much consideration for him to reject recent Congressional plans to make juvenile records available to universities.

"It won't have a deterrent effect," Wu says. "If I'm a 14-year old kid, do I actually care that my record won't be expunged before college? The only thing it is punishment for the sake of punishment, and there are other ways to exact punishment that are more socially useful."

"I hate and despise when people just say things, without giving the matter serious thought," he says. "People have different circumstances that require some degree of individuation, and that it is terribly difficult to have a general rule, especially when it comes to exacting criminal punishment."❖

Afterword

Ironically, at its centennial, the juvenile court has never been more scrutinized and challenged from all sides. The 1999 annual report of the Coalition for Juvenile Justice is entitled *A Celebration or a Wake? The Juvenile Court After 100 Years*. That title reflects current policy trends and public perceptions.

Between 1992 and 1995 alone, 41 States amended their juvenile justice laws to make it easier to try juveniles in criminal court, and just as many loosened confidentiality protections (Sickmund, Snyder, and Poe-Yamagata, 1997). Last year, nearly 18,000 youth spent time in adult prisons (American Correctional Association, 1997), 3,500 in general population with adults (Sickmund, Snyder, and Poe-Yamagata, 1997). Another 7,000 to 8,000 youth are jailed with adults on any given day; many times that number are confined in America's jails during the course of a year (Sickmund, Snyder, and Poe-Yamagata, 1997).

Although the data collection and statistical sampling techniques that are prevalent today were not available in 1899, the founders of the juvenile court seem to have been prescient about the effects of policies that move more youth into the criminal justice system. The majority of children who are referred to juvenile court once never are referred again. Research provides evidence that youth transferred or waived to adult criminal court are rearrested more frequently and for more serious offenses than youth who remain in the juvenile justice system. Youth jailed with adults are five times more likely to be sexually assaulted and eight times more likely to commit suicide while in confinement than youth detained in juvenile facilities.

Often, when the public hears news about the juvenile court, it is following a violent act committed by a youth. Only about one-quarter of 1 percent of all juveniles ages 10–17 were arrested for a violent crime in 1998 (Snyder, 1999). Only 6 percent of all youth arrested are charged with committing a serious violent crime (Sickmund and Snyder, 1995), and both total juvenile crime and juvenile homicides have dropped 56 percent since 1993 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1994 and 1999). Yet the evening news repeatedly portrays children and teenagers as violent, and two-thirds of Americans believe that youth crime is rising.

A tragedy is not a trend. In the public mind, however, the isolated can become the common. The result of media hyperbole is a juvenile court that is badly misunderstood by the very Nation that founded it. One consequence of this misunderstanding is public ambivalence, and at times outright hostility, toward a separate system of justice for juveniles. Yet the public repeatedly indicates that it does not want society to give up on any child, even the child who commits a violent offense.

As the juvenile court enters its second century, there is concern that much of the founders' unique vision of children-as-hope is in jeopardy. The *Second Chance* success stories are told to rekindle the same spirit that ignited the efforts of Jane Addams, Lucy Flower, and Julia Lathrop to make the world a better and more humane place for children and to secure a more promising future for all. These stories of hope, of perseverance, of young people thriving and ultimately living productive lives despite heavy odds—sometimes with help, sometimes on their own—offer a challenge: society must afford today's young Bob Beamons and Sally Hendersons the second chances to become tomorrow's leaders.

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